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Confident Bush shows he is his own man

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

George Bush has been President for six *months, and his second 100 days will* have suited him better than the first.

He has been slow to warm up as President, which led a number of sceptics to voice initial doubts as to the strength of his leadership.

He took over the reins of government cautiously, tentatively, even though the change-over at the White House was smooth and largely trouble-free.

The Bush administration has still not completed its appointments in full, but the good grades the 41st US President was given in advance, as it were, have if anything improved.

He was awarded good grades in advance as being a man with a mind of his own, and not just President Reagan's successor, and for building bridges where his predecessor had waged ideological trench warfare.

Opinion polls show President Bush to be riding high on a wave of public support. His popularity is even greater than President Reagan's.

At this stage in his Presidential career Jimmy Carter was already being dismissed in political circles in Washington as unlikely to succeed.

After his first half year in office President Reagan had riled his Democratic opponents to the hilt and shocked the world to the core with his sabre-rattling.

George Bush has, in contrast, gained widespread acclaim by repeatedly demonstrating his readiness to agree to compromises that make headway and by showing that he has done his homework and knows what he is talking about.

Borne aloft on the wave of sympathy he sensed on his two tours of Europe too, he evidently now feels more at ease.

He seems to be most satisfied with himself. He has gained in self-assurance. His policy has met with approval.

But he is well aware that he has yet to survive his baptism of fire. He has been a competent fair-weather captain but has yet to weather a storm.

As he himself admits, he has been lucky so far. The United States is at peace and in fairly sound economic shape. The West does not face a military threat from the East.

Indeed, what it faces are the risks and opportunities arising from the failure of the communist system and the opening of the Iron Curtain.

President Bush creates the impression of being a cautious captain who deserves the trust that has been placed in him.

But he can only be as good as his team. They must share tasks and responsibilities, and not just in the domestic sector.

In foreign affairs, President Bush has intimated to his allies, he needs them as partners.

If they are to do this role justice they must play their part, and if they take him at his word Europe will grow more self-reliant and less susceptible to US influence.

It may be too soon to draw comparisons, but the Bush Presidency might, like Mr Gorbachov's policy, herald a new era in relations between a superpower and its allies.

That would be tantamount to a partial US withdrawal from Europe, and not just in military terms.

In granting not just Bonn but the European Community the status of a partner in leadership, President Bush is delegating both responsibility and costs.

He is doing so less out of convenience than on grounds of conviction. He seems keen to forgo the predominating role Washington played for so long.

He says he was reluctant to accept that change in Eastern Europe was more than window-dressing, but he is now enthusiastically endorsing and promoting it — and showing great flair and intuition in doing so.

He demonstrated these qualities in Poland and Hungary by taking Soviet sensitivities into acount and not baiting the Kremlin unnecessarily.

He did so at the Western economic summit in Paris by suggesting that the European Commission should coordinate Western aid to Poland and Hungary.

The rich member-countries of the European Community not only have the funds; they can also spearhead less suspiciously than the United States, Moscow's rival superpower, the exercise of influence on East Bloc countries.

Dealing with an injured Soviet bear can be dangerous, but President Bush repeatedly stresses that he will continue to keep his eyes wide open in dealings with Moscow. He is slowly and cautiously heading toward his first summit meeting with Mr Gorbachov, but he doubtless wishes the Soviet leader every success with his reform policy.

Mr Bush is not an ideological crusader, and he seems thankful to be able to find opportunities for, and help with, bridge-building.

He may even see Mr Gorbachov as his partner in opening up the Iron Curtain, although competition between the systems naturally continues (with the military factor steadily declining in importance).

Beyond Containment, the Bush formula for the new era he sees as transcending the aim of containing communism, is based on two expectations.

One is that inter-system rivalry will take diplomatic shape, using the rapier rather than the sabre.

The other is that the East's west will, in the long term, become the West's east. Whether this equation will work and President Bush is able to stay on this course will depend on a number of unknown factors.

First and foremost, will the process of change in the East be free from setbacks and reverses and will the West do all it can to prevent them from happening?

Will, for that matter, the delegation of responsibility practised by President Bush to tie in political forces and to arrive at a consensus both at home and within Nato come a cropper the moment the ship runs into heavy weather? And will the ship run off course unless the captain suddenly recalls that he is in command and takes unpopular decisions?

Jürgen Koar

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 24 July 1989)



Genscher fit again

Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, flanked by his wife, Barbara, and doctor, leaves hospital after recovering from a heart attack. (Photo: dpa)

IN THIS ISSUE

Uproar in the European Parliament



Hardly had the European Parliament met in Strasbourg to elect a new president but there was trouble. It was made by Claude Autant-Lara, 87, the oldest MEP and honorary president of the European Assembly.

M. Autant-Lara is a right-winger who is felt, by his political opponents, to have grown none the wiser for his age.

He certainly made no secret of his views, describing Euro-policies from a right-wing viewpoint, and in doing so using the clichés beloved of right-wingers in this context.

His views can have come as no surprise. They had much in common with the right-wing Euro-election campaign, in which national keynotes prevailed.

Right-wing political parties cannot be denied the right to trundle out their old arguments, but the problem remains. It is that of how national interests are to be reconciled in a united Europe without jeopardising the process of integration. Concessions will have to be made on some issues.

This point has gradually been realised of late after national egoism had more or less stymied integration efforts for years.

Right-wing extremists in Strasbourg could well be the acid test in respect of how far they are prepared to back the concept of European integration.

This will be particularly relevant when it comes to drafting a European constitution that strikes a balance between national and European interests.

The trend toward right-wing extremism may be regretted in Strasbourg, but a walk-out in protest against expressions of right-wing viewpoints, such as was staged against M. Autant-Lara's comments, is not going to solve the problem. Convincing parliamentary work by the Strasbourg assembly is likely to prove more effective as a counter-measure.

Wolf Hepe

(Nordwest Zeitung, Oldenburg, 26 July 1989)

■ INTERNATIONAL

Japan's socialists await their chance as the end of an era beckons

The landslide defeat of Japan's ruling Liberal Democrats in the Upper House of the Diet could be the beginning of the end of what have been 34 years of LDP rule.

The LDP is so badly shaken by a crisis of confidence that it has yet to undertake any serious efforts to stem the tide of its popularity decline.

Its election defeat was a foregone conclusion. If it fails to pull itself together in time it might lose the much more important elections to the Lower House, which must be held by mid-1990 but are likely to be held sooner.

Japan might then find itself ruled by a Socialist-dominated government.

The election results are not a swing to the left; the Communists fared badly. They were a protest by Japanese voters, who are still conservative, against corrupt practices by the Liberal Democrats.

The Opposition parties were able to limit themselves to distinctive slogans. The Socialists, who are opposed to the government's arms programme, also benefited from the climate of East-West detente.

Mr Uno is the third Japanese Premier to have resigned within a year. Now the electoral storm has cleared the air, the LDP doubtless stands a fair chance of coming to its senses and carrying out a purge and root-and-branch reforms.

Younger LDP members of the Diet were indignant about Mr Uno's appointment as Premier, which was based on considerations of intra-party balance and of seniority.

He was clearly not a reformer. Few



older-generation Liberal Democratic MPs are not tainted by Recruitgate and other scandals, but the party's younger ranks include a number of talented and untainted men.

The time has long been ripe for an end to the hierarchical outlook of old. The code followed by feudal society, based on Confucian ideas of order, continues to exercise a tacit influence on Japanese society.

It attached great importance to relations between a leader and his followers, and this attitude continues to play a part among groups within the LDP.

But Confucianism expects leaders to be models of propriety, beyond reproach in their behaviour.

Liberal Democratic MP Masayoshi Ito called for root-and-branch reforms starting with the abolition of the LDP groups that were partly to blame for improper funding practices.

He also called for politicians who had been connected with these practices to be demoted. Details of all donations ought to be made publicly available. All MPs ought to declare details of their earnings and expenditure.

These proposals failed to gain majority support within the LDP. Its reform proposals provide merely for a handful of cosmetic changes.

The election drubbing shows Japanese women, who have gained political self-confidence, and the younger generation to have lost patience with the opaque and corrupt policies pursued by the LDP leadership.

Should the Liberal Democrats fail to go through a process of catharsis, the Opposition's prospects will improve markedly, especially those of the Socialist Party of Japan.

The Socialists are holding talks with the Centrist parties, the Buddhist-oriented Komeito and the right-wing Socialists, about a coalition government.

They have agreed to retain Japan's free-market economy, to make substantial improvements to social security, to step up protection for agriculture, to pursue a policy of "peace diplomacy" and to realign Japanese economic aid to benefit the poorest countries.

Views still differ on defence, atomic energy and policy toward the two Koreas.

The Socialists are aiming, in the long term, at unarmed neutrality for Japan. Yet if they were to come to power they would not cancel unilaterally the security treaty with the United States.

They would try to renegotiate its terms with a view to gradually transforming it into a friendship treaty.

In the long term the SPJ would like to reduce substantially the strength of the Japanese self-defence forces.

The Socialists are also opposed to the construction of fresh nuclear power stations and keen to establish diplomatic ties with North Korea.

The Centrist Opposition parties are in contrast determined to retain defence arrangements with the United States and to maintain the self-defence forces.

The economic and social policy targets of a Centre-Left coalition would not amount to nationalisation of key industries.

But government influence would be increased, welfare provisions would be much more generous and the trade unions would be more powerful.

That would lead to a number of problems the Federal Republic of Germany already faces. In other words, the cutting edge of Japan's competitive position would probably lose some of its keenness.

Fred de La Trobe

(Die Welt, Bonn, 25 July 1989)

German police and Namibia

Bonn could achieve a twofold objective by temporarily sending German police officers to Namibia.

In taking part in an international UN body it could demonstrate its special responsibility to ensure democratic development in a former German colony.

Yet the special nature of German participation would take the wind out of the sails of those who regularly have misgivings about Bundeswehr soldiers serving with blue-helmeted UN peace-keeping forces.

The Federal government is to be congratulated on having stated that the international deployment of police officers is an issue of fundamental importance that is to be given careful consideration.

The role envisaged for the mixed UN police force is merely that of observing and monitoring the work of local security forces. But there can be no ruling out UN police officers, despite their passive role, being involved in conflict situations. This is a risk that must be borne in mind.

In the long term the Federal Republic cannot sidestep forever a decision on taking part in international UN missions. It cannot, for that matter, seek to run a lesser risk than other states of comparable size and status.

If sending out police officers is felt to be responsible, Bonn ought to have the guts to agree. It ought also to be prepared to weather a domestic debate if need be and if, for instance, the mission were not to run as smoothly as one might wish.

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 26 July 1989)

Behind-the-scenes contact between Israel and PLO

Both leading blocs in Israel's coalition government, after strongly criticising the United States, have now made more or less covert contact with leading Palestinians.

It no longer seems to matter whether they are Palestinians with close contacts with the PLO or PLO members. There is little difference between the two.

The Israelis were clearly urged to do so by their most important allies, the Americans, who also leaned heavily on them to reactivate the peace plan as originally agreed by the Israeli Cabinet.

Likud and Labour agreed to do so after Premier Shamir had made substantial concessions to the hawks in his own camp.

That led to a grave coalition crisis, with Labour insisting on the validity of the peace plan as approved after a lengthy tug-of-war.

It can have been no coincidence that news of alleged (and inadequately denied) contacts between both Likud and Labour politicians and leading Palestinians broke at this very moment.

Interestingly, both the United States and the Soviet Union were involved behind the scenes; both have a clientele on whom they can exert influence.

The greater moderation of Soviet foreign policy under Mr Gorbachov is increasingly apparent in the Middle East, as elsewhere.

It remains to be seen whether this is a preliminary to the proposed international conference to be attended by all five permanent members of the UN Security Council or is to lead to a new kind of umbrella that no longer requires the participation of other countries.

What is most remarkable about all these contats, however, is the extent to which, the Israeli peace plan has already found its way into the Middle East peace settlement deliberations of all concerned.

Even the PLO no longer rejects the Israeli plan out of hand; it merely stipulates terms on which it insists before it will accept the plan as it stands.

Two points of particular importance are who is to supervise elections in the occupied territories and whether Arab inhabitants of Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem are to be allowed to vote.

Mr Shamir still strictly rules out voting by East Jerusalem Arabs. Israel would clearly like to consider the Jerusalem Question as having been settled. The Arabs have yet to show any intention of being prepared to do so.

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 27 July 1989)

Bonn's role in Middle East

There is a great difference between Bonn making contact with the Palestine Liberation Organisation and other Western countries doing so.

The historic burden of National Socialism is bound to affect Bonn's policy toward Israel and the entire Middle East.

What this means, in practice, is a special commitment to the Israelis and a special restraint in dealings with Israel's foes.

So circumspection and restraint must be observed in establishing contacts with the PLO. Contact must only be made once it is clear that it does harm Israel's interests.

Yet it cannot be taboo forever, and the Federal government, which has now set about forging official links with the PLO, has timed it right.

No-one can accuse Bonn of having prematurely spearheaded developments. Other European Community countries have long begun to break their PLO taboos.

Washington, as Israel's closest ally, is increasingly coming to accept the Palestinian reality, which is — whether one likes it or not — that the PLO is the only representative of Palestinian interests to be taken seriously.

PLO leader Yasser Arafat has clearly parted company with his policy of old, which was to drive the Israelis into the Mediterranean.

No-one who wants to see a peace settlement negotiated in the Middle East can hope to ignore the PLO.

European and US politicians are increasingly coming round to this viewpoint, and even in Israel there is not a united front against contacts of any kind with the PLO.

The conservative Likud bloc is opposed to the idea, but its coalition partner, Labour, would be prepared to back a peace process in which the PLO was involved.

That must be the crux of German policy. Bonn's Middle East policy is not just part of a European framework.

It must, in particular, be inspired by the Israelis themselves, especially by Israelis who are prepared to make use of any reasonable opportunity of bringing about lasting peace in the region.

(Westdeutsche Allgemeine, Essen, 25 July 1989)

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■ THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

Reconciling ecological policy with economic demands



No-one can accuse the Social Democrats of being faint-hearted, but if they really plan to base next year's general election campaign on the manifesto drafted by their "Progress 90" working party, they are sure to find the going rough.

Some idea of what it may be like can be gained from the hue and cry raised by the SPD's political opponents.

The old instruments of torture are being trundled out yet again. These usually succeed in casting doubts on the Social Democrats' suitability to govern.

They range from CDU allegations of the SPD's "frenzy to reconstruct" to talk of the Social Democrats as the "party of tax increases" and of "an ecological planned economy."

Count Lambsdorff, leader of the Free Democrats, the CDU/CSU's coalition partner in Bonn, is more circumspect.

He knows that the SPD's programme for an "ecological reconstruction of industrial society" exercises a great visionary power that cannot be combatted with slogans alone.

The FDP evidently feels these tenets are worth considering on their merits, and that mustn't just be taken as a covert hint that the Liberals don't want to blot their copy book with a possible post-1990 coalition partner.

In the CDU too there are thoughtful environmental protectionists who feel unable to dismiss out of hand the idea of promoting environmental protection by free market means.

SPD business manager Anke Fuchs says the party plans to "expect of people something that is in their own interest."

That accurately pinpoints the political dilemma the Social Democrats face.

On the one hand people are strongly tempted to take a great leap forward on environmental protection, by which they mainly envisage energetically calling industry and the state to order.

On the other hand this resolve diminishes in proportion as it affects people's own lives, and especially the money in their pockets.

Experience over the past 10 years has shown that the catalytic converter makes painfully slow headway in reducing vehicle emission until tax incentives make it a financially attractive proposition.

Fuel saving was only a virtue for as long as it was made essential by scarcity and high prices dictated by oil sheikhs in the Persian Gulf.

In this respect the SPD's programme has inestimable advantages. It is the first attempt by a leading political party to impress on consumers in the form of an overall cost estimate the expense of significant efforts by industrial society in the direction of environmental protection.

Motor fuel, people are told, will cost nearly two marks per litre. Free-range eggs will be much more expensive than the factory variety. Motoring will become more difficult.

These are the logical consequences of efforts constantly undertaken by the CDU/CSU too to implement a task incumbent on the state by free market means.

What distinguishes the SPD from the CDU/CSU is the hope of drafting a consistent overall concept that convinces everyone.

Yet even a few days of debate within the party have been enough to show how serious the inner contradictions are.

Economic policy specialists, who had a hard time in the policy commission chaired by SPD Saar Premier Oskar Lafontaine, fear German industry may face serious competitive disadvantages in the European and international markets.

Spokesmen for classical SPD social policy were overridden too. They argue that there are disadvantaged groups in society that ought not to be additionally burdened with meeting the cost of their contribution toward environmental pollution.

Environmental protectionists on the commission were aware of this problem and have devised gigantic machinery to handle the problem, a Heath Robinson-style approach reminiscent of SPD finance policy at its worst.

Pensioners or students, who cannot be helped via tax benefits, are to receive offset payments by the state on a scale the SPD policy commission rightly dares not specify.

The solution outlined for long-distance commuters is typical of the vicious circle the reformers face. They are keen to make motoring markedly more expensive for the sake of clean air yet anxious not to penalise SPD voters who travel long distances to and from work.

Tit for tat

Tax benefits for long-distance commuters are to offset this extra expense. But that is to take away with one hand what has been given by the other.

Herr Lafontaine will only be able to resolve such contradictions by lowering his programmatic sights.

Environmental policy can only succeed as a combination of small steps forward, as successes and failures alike have shown over the past 20 years.

There can be no such thing as a "grand design" because conditions are too complicated to be packed into a 20-page election manifesto, especially as the clash between ecology and economy can only be settled by compromise.

Jörg Bischoff

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 20 July 1989)

Discussions with Greens

Contacts between SPD and Green politicians at Schloss Crottorf, near Bonn, may not be normal parliamentary routine, but they cannot be disparagingly described as "clandestine".

In resorting to this line of argument the Christian Democrats are clearly reminded of the early 1960s when meetings of this kind paved the way for the SPD-FDP coalition.

Yet Christian Democrat Friedrich Bohl should not forget that CDU leader Helmut Kohl spent years dallying with Hans-Dietrich Genscher and Josef Ertl before he too was able to form a coalition with the Free Democrats.

An SPD-Green coalition is still a distant prospect. In their fireside chat at Schloss Crottorf the two sides seem to have found they have as many issues on which they differ as on which they agree.

Foreign policy, for instance, was the mainstay of common ground within the SPD-FDP coalition. Between Social Democrats and Greens it seems likelier to be a bone of contention.

The Greens have a deep-rooted dislike of blocs of all kinds. They have yet to learn from the SPD that blocs can only be superseded once they have been accepted as a working arrangement.

The Greens would do better to make headway in the debate within their own ranks than to hold talks of this kind with members of the SPD. That is the only way in which they can find out what views command majority support in their own party.

None of the three tendencies within the Greens enjoys majority support. If the Greens had to decide here and now whether to join a government in Bonn they would probably be unable to agree to more than tolerate an SPD minority administration.

So they would do better to clarify in their own ranks just where they stand before setting out to canvass voter support for reforms backed by both Social Democrats and Greens.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 24 July 1989)

Supporters deserting in droves for the extreme right — survey

Nothing has been the same in Bonn since voter support for right-wing parties has upset the electoral applecart.

When the Bonn political parties think about the general election, due in just over a year, they have nightmares. Even the Social Democrats.

The Christian Democrats may be in the doldrums but the SPD can hardly be said to be deriving benefit from their discomfiture.

The findings of a Forsa survey have shaken Social Democrats, arguably bearing out long-held fears.

If traditional SPD voters in Social Democratic strongholds vote next year along the same lines as they did in the mid-June European Parliament poll, the SPD will fail to poll more than 40 per cent in the general election.

In other words, the survey concludes, there will be no hope of a return to power in Bonn.

The survey finds that in working-class areas traditional SPD voters have deserted en masse to the right-wing Republicans.

Dortmund, an SPD stronghold in the Ruhr, was the case in point, but pollsters are convinced the same would apply in similar areas all over the country.

An even more alarming finding, from the SPD viewpoint, is that a further seven per cent of Social Democratic supporters feel they might possibly switch allegiance to extreme right-wing parties.

On a slightly more reassuring note, over half the traditional SPD voters who have already done so still feel well-disposed toward the Social Democrats.

Why have working-class SPD voters fallen for the Republican party line? The aliens problem is said to have been the most frequent motive.

Four out of 10 traditional SPD voters who have switched allegiance to the Republicans are worried their financial situation might take a turn for the worse over the next two years.

They also share a sense of "political alienation." Nearly all of them are said to agree with the statement; "I don't think politicians much care what people like me think."

Is it a case of the socially disadvantaged falling for the blandishments of right-wing extremists who have nothing to offer but fine words?

That can only be seen as a slap in the face for those who still see the SPD as a classic party of the working class, mainly catering for the interests of the socially disadvantaged.

That is where to start tackling the problem, says Florian Gerster, Social Democratic MP for Worms and Alzey, Rhineland-Palatinate, and a leading SPD right-winger.

Social policy must be given priority in the SPD manifesto: "Politics for ordinary people, the old, the poor and the sick."

The SPD must avoid creating the impression of catering more for peripheral groups such as aliens and applicants for political asylum rather than for socially disavantaged Germans.

That doesn't mean the SPD must do less for aliens and applicants for political asylum, he says. It is merely a matter of priorities.

"The SPD must care first and foremost for 'ordinary people,' then — and then only — for everyone else."

His second line of defence against the Republicans is an urgent counsel of caution in connection with talks in Bonn about cooperation between Social Democrats and Greens at national level.

"We mustn't create the impression that we are actively engaged in attempts to pave the way for a Red-Green coalition," Herr Gerster says.

That might make conservative working-class voters feel unsure of where they stood in relation to the SPD, and the SPD still had much more in common with the Christian and Free Democrats than with the Greens.

Does that mean there can be no question of a Red-Green coalition after next year's general election? "I am not ruling out a situation that leads to a Red-Green coalition because there is no alternative with a working majority," he says.

But for Herr Gerster a Red-Green coalition is the last option. He sees a Grand Coalition (of Christian and Social Democrats) as an "emergency solution" too, but the "emergency" would need to be more serious to justify a Red-Green coalition, he implies.

He feels a "process of fermentation" is under way in the SPD, with all options open including the choice of Chancellor candidate next year.

Gerster knows that an SPD with Oskar Lafontaine as candidate for Chancellor is likelier to consider a Green coalition than an SPD led by the more conservative Hans-Jochen Vogel.

Reinhard Breidenbach

(Allgemeine Zeitung, Mainz, 26 July 1989)



■ THE LAW

Controversy over planned changes to police's shoot-to-kill rules

Police in Germany are allowed to shoot to kill in a situation where a life depends on it. Extension of this rule has been proposed — and has unleashed heated debate. The articles on this page look at the planned changes and also at what other countries do.

Calling the intentional killing of a human being a *"final lifesaving shot"* is bound to arouse suspicion.

Simplifying formulations of this kind — another example is the "management of toxic waste" — suggest that language is being misused to cover something up.

Not quite so in the case of the "final lifesaving shot" Bonn Interior Minister, Wolfgang Schäuble (CDU), would like to see legally established for those sections of the police subject to national jurisdiction.

This initiative is an attempt to find an acceptable solution to the problems which arise during violent confrontations between the police, hostages and gangsters.

The hostage-taking drama in Gladbeck about a year ago showed how fatal the outcome of such a situation can be.

If the idea of saving the lives of the hostages is viewed as the main objective in these extreme situations the notion of a deadly "finale" seems less objectionable.

However, the decision by a marksman or a head of operations to shoot to kill will not be facilitated by a new law.

The police are already allowed to shoot to kill in a life-for-a-life situation.

One need only recall the rescue operation by the "Grenzschutztruppe 9" (GSG 9), a special border police unit operative since 1973, which freed 86 hostages held by terrorists in a Lufthansa airliner in Mogadishu (Somalia) back in 1977.

So why is Interior Minister Schäuble keen on adopting a "shoot-to-kill" regulation which was elaborated at Land level in 1977 but only became law in Bavaria, Lower Saxony and Rhineland-Palatinate?

The arguments for and against the regulation were already discussed in detail at the beginning of the 70s; new angles are not in sight.

Irrespective of what may have led to the terrible outcome of the Gladbeck hostage drama — technical slip-ups, organisational chaos and the on occasion highly dangerous curiosity of onlookers and the media — the blame cannot be put on the lack of corresponding laws.

The advocates of a regulation enabling the police to shoot to kill wrongly believe that the supplementation of the right of all persons to self-defence and emergency assistance in the form of a special law for the police at a national level will lead to greater legal certainty.

The only correct aspect in this line of argument is that the police have to respect the principle of proportionality in every operation; under certain circumstances a private individual may be allowed to do more that a policeman.

According to existing laws, however, no policeman would be prosecuted if the shot he fired was "the only means to avert an impending danger to life" or the risk of permanent and serious damage to health.

The argument that police officials need support in the form of a clearer regulation is also inappropriate.

Schäuble's initiative merely appears to clarify the matter. In what situation, for example, is shooting the "only means"?

What action should be taken if several criminals are pointing guns at the heads of their victims and pull the trigger in a reflex response to shots by the police?

When should a "solution by negotiation" be ruled out?

Laws can do no more than provide an abstract framework. They are of little use when it comes to tackling a hostage-taking situation on the spot.

Finally, the inititiave overlooks the fact that even in the event of a legal regulation an inquiry would be needed after the event to establish whether the situation warranted killing the criminal.

The procedure, therefore, would remain the same.

Is this discussion no more than what the North Rhine-Westphalian Interior Ministry describes as a "typically German legalistic dispute"?

North Rhine-Westphalia's Interior Minister, Herbert Schnoor, has always spearheaded those politicians who claim that an express legal empowerment to shoot to kill is unnecessary, since the police are obliged to do their utmost to save lives anyway.

What is more, these politicians are still waiting for proof that any single operation was bungled because the ability to shoot to kill was not laid down in a special regulation.

The police trade union quite rightly remarked that a special law the decision to shoot to kill or not still remains a matter for the conscience of individual policemen to decide even if a new law is introduced.

Policemen should not be compelled to shoot just because the law forces them to do so.

Furthermore, the police should only use their guns to save lives.

The police union rejects shooting to kill with the intention of averting serious damage to the health of bystanders.

If Schäuble has his way, however, the police would be able to shoot kidnappers if, as in the case of the gangsters Rösner and Degowski in the Gladbeck drama, they move into a crowd of people.

Even Bonn admits that Schäuble's initiative, assuming it is accepted by the FDP, will only have a limited effect.

If a Land calls in the GSG 9, for example, the unit is then subject to Land law.

It is claimed that the initiative is primarily intended as a signal to the Länder to develop a more uniform approach.

Schäuble, however, must have realised that his initiative would not be accepted in North Rhine-Westphalia, Hesse, the Saarland, Bremen, Hamburg and Berlin.

Was he perhaps hoping that this move would win back voters on the right-wing fringe of his party who have constantly called for a tougher approach by the police?

In what has long since become a legal rather than political dispute Baden-Württemberg, which also intends establishing the right to shoot to kill in its Land law, has come up with a conciliatory proposal.

Instead of a uniformly worded law all Land Interior Ministers should officially approve of the authorisation to shoot to kill, but also emphasise the responsibility of the head of operations.

It is doubtful whether such a declaration will be made.

One thing is certain: it would not be able to prevent a new discussion over the controversial law following the next kidnapping drama.

Clemens Bollinger

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 26 July 1989)

A 'back-door death penalty?'

The "final lifesaving shot" is the deliberate killing of a criminal in order to free hostages.

The shot is generally fired at the brain so as to ensure that the criminal is unable to react and to rule out any reflex response.

The critics of this line of action feel that it is tantamount to the death penalty through the backdoor.

Its advocates, on the other hand, claim that the final lifesaving shot is the only means of eliminating a kidnapper in such a way as to make sure that he/she cannot kill the hostages at the last moment.

According to existing laws shooting to kill is allowed if it is the only means of averting an impending to life or an impending danger risk of serious bodily harm to a hostage.

This regulation is covered by the self-defence paragraph 32 in the Criminal Code. The final lifesaving shot is only regulated in the police laws in three of the eleven Länder and ranks as an act of sovereignty.

Elsewhere the police marksmen have to refer to the general right to emergency assistance, which is less clearly defined.

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 26 July 1989)

How other European countries handle this complex issue

The 120,000 members of the *British* police force are still in principle unarmed. Their basic training does not involve the use of firearms.

Small special units are trained for this purpose. Roughly 2,500 of the 28,000 policemen and -women in London (Metropolitan Police) have the right to carry arms.

Firearms are used if armed persons ignore demands to lay down their arms and if there is a danger that they might start shooting.

The general motto for police action in such cases is: shoot to put the criminal out of action. This means that shots are not fired at legs or arms but at the body.

The police, however, are not allowed to shoot to kill, even though it cannot be ruled out that this may happen.

The police in Britain very rarely use firearms. Less than twenty times a year.

There have been cases in which policemen were prosecuted because of making unnecessary use of firearms, but not one of them was sentenced.

These regulations apply in England, Wales and Scotland, not in in Northern Ireland.

The *Dutch* police are not allowed by law to fire a "final lifesaving shot or to shoot to kill."

The use of firearms is regulated in the "General Police Regulations" and is worded restrictively.

All situations in which police are allowed to use firearms are clearly defined.

They include self-defence as well as threatening a policeman with a gun.

A disciplinary commission is currently investigating the behaviour of the police in the Colonel van de Kieft kidnapping case.

The officer was kidnapped by a German drug addict and died after being hit by a bullet from a policeman's gun after a special unit tried to free him by force.

In *Italy* the use of firearms by the police is regulated by the principles laid down in Article 53 of the Criminal Code, which dates back to the fascist era. The police are only allowed to shoot if, "in fulfilment of their official duties, they are forced to do so by the need to avert violence."

This provision does not specify how the firearms should be used.

According to the Italian Interior Ministry the principle of proportionality applies: a shot can only be fired at a person if there is a direct attack on the police or on another person.

If criminals are killed during gun fights with gangsters the police do not normally have to worry about being prosecuted.

Even during the "leaden" years of the fight against the Red Brigades, during which many people were killed on both sides, public opinion as a whole and the large majority of politicians did not seriously question these norms.

Criticism was only voiced in left-wing circles that the police had been all too "trigger-happy." In *France* one of two special units is automatically called in whenever hostages are taken: the police group RAID or the gendarmerie unit GIGN.

In over 20 operations in four years RAID police have never once fired a lethal shot.

There were more casualties when GIGN "soldiers" were involved.

The most prominent victim was the terrorist Machoro in New Caledonia in 1985.

Up to now there has been no discussion about the right to shoot to kill, since a member of the police force basically has no more rights than every citizen in this field.

The police are only allowed to shoot if they themselves or another person is in "serious danger."

This is a "personal decision"; an "order from above" is not necessary.

If someone is killed after being shot the person who fired the shot, even if this is a policeman or a gendarme, has to justify his action to the public prosecutor.

(Die Welt, Bonn, 27 July 1989)

■ PERSPECTIVE

Communism: the decline and fall of a theology

The drama of events in Eastern Europe and the daily reports of their momentum makes it easy to forget that we are witnessing an historical development. . . .

Regardless of all its victims and crimes just one generation ago communism was a vision of salvation.

Its worldwide proliferation was marked by the thrust of a millenarianistic ideal.

It promised to eliminate class differences, national conflicts, exploitation and poverty, hailing the glory of a liberated cultural existence.

This is not the way things turned out. All promises died an early death in an unprecedented marasmus.

Wherever communism came to power it brought about bondage, barracking and societal paralysis and came nowhere near redeeming its pledges.

Nowhere else in the world are class differences so apparent as in socialist societies with their *nomenklatura* and double currency. Nowhere are the shortcomings of a social system so obvious.

The erupting nationalities conflicts throughout the East bloc reveal that it lags behind the rest of the world politically, economically as well as in its ability to overcome deeply rooted prejudices.

Irrespective of the final outcome of the ongoing process of fermentation, the idea of communism will no longer be able to regain the force of conviction which was once its source of inspiration and which gave its craving for power the character of a religion.

The astounding proposal by Italian comrades, which has initially been rejected, that the term "communism" should be deleted from the name and programme of Italy's communist party indicates the extent of this collapse. For decades ideological projections served to justify all the sacrifices, the millions of people who died as well as the deprivations of everyday life. They gave the masses a sense of certainty and ensured obedience.

The shattering of illusions means that communism loses all its means of compensation for its various deficiencies, its only basis of legitimation.

All that remains is the cynicism of powermongers, whose goal is simply the retention of privileges and party posts.

A top-ranking East German functionary recently claimed that "a certain general-secretary" was in the process of making the big mistake of voluntarily sharing power with others.

The doubts about the theory and practice of communism relate to the system in its entirety.

In Poland and to a growing extent in the Soviet Union observers more and more frequently maintain that the ongoing process cannot be described, as by the West, as a reform of communism, but is nothing more than its collapse.

The language of reform, they claim, simply tries to circumvent the long overdue admission that the communist idea itself was mistaken right from the start, not just its translation into practice.

Typically enough the criticism so far has related to Brezhnev and Stalin but not to the postulates and objectives of Lenin. Even Gorbachov only talks of errors and distortions.

The widespread suspiciousness towards "perestroika" and "glasnost", which many find difficult to understand outside of the Soviet sphere of influence, is rooted in a radical loss of credibility.

This relates to the system as a whole rather than to individual leadership figures. The hopes once pinned on the driving force of the communist ideal have dissipated.

During a recent international conference, a Polish delegate remarked derisively that only the illiterate masses in Latin America and German intellectuals still believe in communism and its message.

He recalled the remark by Régis Debray, according to which communism is generally a "luxury phenomenon of problem-free societies, as it were part of the the intellectual folklore of Western Europe."

Surprisingly, this collapse, which like all historical process of disintegration involves considerable risks, is only viewed as a hope or even its fulfilment in the West.

By way of contrast tremendous pessimism prevails in the Soviet sphere of influence.

This mood creates a strangely unreal blend of dynamism and resignation and is marked by talk of catastrophes rather than improvements.

The fact that the East bloc "tenants" warn against the slogan of a "common European house" may be connected with the keen sense of realism of persons who have been oppressed for so long.

It cannot be ruled out that Gorbachov is willing to go further than the critics in his own country expect. Until then, however, the traditional structures persist.

If they are not swept aside the antagonism which has predominated during this century between constitutional democracies and totalitarian regimes will continue, even though the straitjacket character of the latter has been removed in many instances.

Up to now the West has been able to ward off the Soviet threat by means of a combination of steadfastness and flexibility.

It has no reason to drop this strategy at a time of a growing realisation that communism was a misguided odyssey.

All that is missing on its death certificate is the official stamp of authentication.

Joachim Fest

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 25 July 1989)

Hitler-Stalin pact: another Soviet fairy-tale exposed

Valentin Falin, head of the Soviet Central Committee's department for international affairs and former ambassador in Bonn, has made the first official admission that a pact between Hitler and Stalin – under which the Soviet Union was free to take the Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania while Germany was allowed to take most of Poland – did exist.

This is a retraction of the falsification by the Soviet Union for over four decades. Valentin, appearing on television in the Federal Republic of Germany, said (in reference to a secret protocol to the German-Soviet friendship treaty of 1939): "Yes, there was a supplementary protocol."

All history books and school textbooks in the Soviet Union and all the history fairytales shaped to fit in with the party line in Europe's communist states now look like the product of political expedience.

The hitherto official version of the "accession" of the Baltic states to the Soviet Union, the claim that the Soviet Union generously complied with the wishes of the Baltic governments, is now exposed as historical misrepresentation of the worst kind.

The truth is that Stalin, in accordance with the division of Central and South-East Europe into "spheres of influence", brought death and terror upon the Baltic peoples, robbed them of their identity and annexed their states.

In East Poland, which consisted of large parts of White Russia, Lithuania and the Ukraine, Stalin employed diabolical methods to expel, massacre and abduct the Poles.

Unfortunately, the Poles passed on this lesson in an undiminished form to the Germans when they were expelled from their traditional territories.

All this is history. Even without the existence of the original secret protocol document it was a historical fact. In the final analysis, it was more significant than any piece of paper. There were undoubtedly several reasons for Moscow's reluctance to acknowledge the existence of all parts of the disgraceful pact between Stalin and Hitler.

It was already difficult enough to explain why the two dictators signed a pact, but even more embarrassing to be exposed as a greedy robber of land.

Stalin could have made a deal with Hitler without bullying other peoples and eradicating entire states if his aim was simply to guarantee the security of the Soviet Union in the face of the Hitlerian threat.

The fact remains: Stalin was nothing more and nothing less than an imperialist and a robber of land. And nothing better than Hitler.

The third reason for Soviet reluctance to accept historical facts: what happens if injustice is seen and confirmed to be an injustice?

Peoples have long memories — this is not the first time Moscow has made this painful experience: Japan does not forget the Kuril Islands, Romania has not forgotten Bessarabia, the Poles have not forgotten their territory beyond the frontiers laid down in Versailles, the Hungarians cannot forget the bloody quashing of their revolution, the Czechs remember 1968, the Germans the Berlin uprising in 1953 and the division of Germany.

For two years now the Balts have been insisting on the publication of the entire Hitler-Stalin pact, the admission of the injustice of their annexation and the annulment of the treaty.

This boils down to reparations and compensation.

The Germans have - rightly — lost their "sphere of influence." The Soviets retained theirs. The question is: how much longer?

Eduard Neumaier

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 28 July 1989)

■ THE WORKFORCE

State rejects firm's pioneering plan for weekend work and shorter hours

A plan by tyre maker Uniroyal to boost production by introducing voluntary weekend shifts has been rejected by the *Land* government of North Rhine-Westphalia.

Uniroyal, a subsidiary of Continental AG, Hanover, estimates that with an additional 12-hour shift on both Saturday and Sunday, production would be increased as much as 30 per cent — at a time when the tyre market is booming.

But Hermann Heinemann, the *Land* Social Democrat Labour Minister, has rejected the application on the grounds that it violates the German constitution, Basic Law.

But the parent company, Continental, is not taking the decision lying down. A spokesman says talks would continue with the *Land* government.

The firm had reached agreement with its employees. The works council and the trades union, IG Chemie, are impressed with the plan, which would create 400 jobs.

Part of the plan was to compensate for weekend shifts by cutting the working week from 38.5 hours to 32 hours without reduction in pay. There are advantages, then, on both sides.

Article 139 of Basic Law says that Sunday and public holidays are described as days "of rest from work and of spiritual edification."

This is not absolute, of course. In the Industrial Code dating from the 19th century exceptions to having Sunday as a day of rest are specifically listed.

Restaurants and pubs were allowed to open and anyone involved in health matters can work.

In industry technical grounds could be a reason for working on Sunday. Chemical reactions, for example, cannot be stopped at the weekend.

Computer manufacturer IBM can operate at the weekends, not because the company was given exemption status from the Industrial Code but because of a decision handed down by the Stuttgart *Land* government.

IBM could prove that too many chip rejects would be produced if production were closed down for the weekend and started up again on Monday.

Technical grounds of this sort do not apply to tyre production. In Uniroyal's case the considerations are much more economic, which Herr Heinemann is not prepared to take into account.

He is an SPD politician and fears that if he were to approve the Uniroyal plan, there would be a flood of requests for similar treatment.

Many employers would like to use their machines at weekends. For years they have talked about greater flexibility in working hours. Their demands have met with bitter opposition from most trades unions: except for IG Chemie, that is.

In the case of Uniroyal the union has shown itself ready to talk about the matter. All the other individual trades unions in the Düsseldorf-based Federation of Trades Unions have rejected an extension of the working week to the weekend.

The engineering union, IG Metall, has led the way in opposing this. This union has shown that central to its 1990 wage demands is the sanctity of the weekend as a rest period.

Employers are holding the carrot of a reduction in the hours worked in a working week before workers and trades unionists to gain their aim of greater flexibitity.

Joachim Kreimer de Fries, wage expert at the Trades Union Federation, said: "This has increased the pressure on the trades unions."

Employers' representatives have made it clear that work would have to be distributed in a different way if the working week were reduced.

The question for Herr Kreimer de Fries is in what form could the trades unions accept flexibility. He said that the unions are prepared to talk about this with the exception of further weekend working and further night work.

What matters to the employers, however, is working at the weekends and particularly on Sundays. They have high hopes of drastically reducing production costs in this way.

Employers argue that machines, getting more expensive all the time, only become economically viable when they are running as long as possible.

The trades unions are aware of this economic advantage. But Reinhard Kiel from IG Metall headquarters in Frankfurt said that nevertheless "the weekend was not up for discussion."

He said that a weekend without work represented an achievement for trades unionism. It was sacrosanct and therefore not to be weighed against economic advantages.

At the spring round of wage talks, IG Metall intends to ensure that the working week is defined as from Monday to Friday in the individual *Länder* wage agreements.

This has already been established in the wage agreements valid in Baden-Württemberg and Hesse. The trades unions are trying here to keep their ranks closed. Working hours confirmed in wage agreements are not available for negotiation by employers or works councils.

A regulation governing working hours such as that at Bayerische Motorenwerke in Regensburg, would not come into consideration.

BMW management there and the works council came to an agreement that the working week would be reduced to 36 hours spread over four days with the inclusion of Saturday as a work day.

Professor Fritz Vilmar, a Berlin sociologist, has criticised the rigid stance adopted by the trades unions as "federation egoism."

He said: "The workers are lumping everyone together, although for a young bachelor, for example, it could be advantageous to accept working at the weekend and a reduction of week-day hours."

Professor Vilmar equally pilloried the rigid attitude the trades unions adopted towards part-time employment.

In a paper IG Metall demanded from all its officials that they reduced part-time employment as far as possible.

The paper said: "The unlimited introduction of part-time employment as a general strategy would be nothing else but reducing the working week without a compensating wage adjustment."

The professor said this attitude disregarded the real interests of nine million workers who, according to a survey, would carry on working part-time even if they had to accept less pay.

Furthermore the chance would be wasted of creating 100,000 extra jobs through the introduction of part-time employment voluntarily.

However, Professor Vilmar shares the fears of the trades unions that smart managers could exploit part-time workers and expect them to be on call for work when they were wanted.

This is why he has demanded that in wage agreements guidelines should be included which prevent abuse, and at the same time give to the individual worker the possibility of negotiating the most favourable working hours for himself.

But it should be taken into account that the individual worker is the weaker in worker-employer negotiations, he pointed out.

Fritz Scharf from the Max Planck Institute for Social Research in Cologne has suggested that workers with similar aims and interests should be brought together in groups according to age and family status and employer and employees could work out an arrangement suitable to them both.

Rudolf Geer of the Employers Association in Engineering Industry, however, warned against exaggerated expectations. He said: "Absolute autonomy about working hours for a worker was unrealistic since the ecompany's operations would be disrupted."

The question of weekend working is as controversial among the political parties as it is among trades unions and employers.

Individual politicians have come to prominence by making statements. Prime among them is Labour Minister



Norbert Blüm, who supports the work schedule practised by BMW in Regensburg.

He was criticised by the employees as well as by employers for his remarks about including Saturday in the working week and for this reducing the hours worked in a week to 36.

As expected the employers supported the proposal about working on Saturday but rejected a further reduction in the number of hours worked in the week.

The trades unions took and almost diametrically opposite attitude.

Oskar Lafontaine, SPD deputy chairman, is not only in favour of more Saturday working but, along with Hermann Rappe, chairman of IG Metall, he is one of those in the SPD who is open-minded about working on Sundays.

Herr Lafontaine, who is also Premier of the Saar, has also come out strongly for amendments to the Industrial Code.

The views that Hermann Rappe and Oskar Lafontaine espouse are controversial within their party, the SPD. The stand is in contradiction to a proposal for a working hours law, which the Social Democrats have introduced into the Bundestag.

The SPD want to distribute working time fundamentally between Monday and Friday.

The SPD executive could not finally make up its mind on such a clear formulation when it came to approving the decision paper dealing with "solidarity in employment policy."

The SPD was much more in favour of a general reduction of the working week without a reduction in pay, a system in

Continued on page 12

Making it easier for women to return to their job

More and more companies are giving women better opportunities to be both mothers and workers.

Young mothers are given a whole year of family leave (an extension of a legally enforced leave for pregnant women) with the right to return if they want to.

Many others are given guarantees of re-employment even after they resign to have and look after children.

While women are raising children, they often maintain contact with their company through further-training facilities.

Although these advantages are available to both father and mother they have until now been used mainly by women.

The chemicals industry was one of the first to make these special arrangements available to young parents. In 1986 BASF began a programme under which young fathers and mothers could drop out of work for a maximum of seven years with a guarantee of re-employment.

So far almost every second eligible BASF worker has taken advantage of the offer.

Bayer has had a company agreement concerning family and job since April 1987. More than 300 of the total workforce of 63,755, have made use of the possibility of remaining away from work for up to three years for one child and up to seven years if there are more children in the family.

Not many men have taken advantage of this arrangement — six in fact.

The re-employment guarantee is linked to the condition that during the time off to look after the family the employee will improve his or her professional qualifications by further training.

The demand for leave to look after a young family has been limited among managers.

Most of them who do take parental leave return to their work before it comes to an end.

Detergent manufacturers Henkel also intend to make it attractive for young mothers to return to work after they have had their children. The Henkel benefits include stand-ins during holidays, kindergartens and supervision of school homework.

Mothers and fathers at Daimler-Benz also do not have to leave the company to bring up their children. As with VW and the retail trade they can for a number of years take family leave.

Daimler-Benz also offers a benefit which is unique in Germany: a third of this family leave is included in calculations towards the employee pension scheme.

dpa

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 20 July 1989)

■ FINANCE

Pomp and circumstance at the economic summit



Anyone who was expecting plain words from the Seven on the foremost issue facing them will have been disappointed with the French Revolution bicentenary summit in Paris.

The heads of state and government of the seven leading Western industrialised countries had next to nothing to say about the sovereign debt crisis.

Their call for a more varied and flexible outlook on financial support for reform programmes was hardly worth making.

Their appeal to commercial banks to adopt a realistic and constructive approach in negotiations with debtor countries was just an empty phrase of the kind for which one reaches when nothing better comes to mind.

There was no mention of the initiative François Mitterrand, the summit's French host, was expected to launch: a call on the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to play a larger role in financing sovereign debts.

The pomp and circumstance of the Paris summit thus signally failed to achieve results on this issue.

After the no-show summit a viewpoint was firmly and all the more trenchantly expressed by Alfred Herrhausen, spokesman for the Deutsche Bank board.

His previously stated opinions on the sovereign debt problem caused a stir. They have, incidentally, been regularly rejected by his fellow-bankers.

After a number of preparatory hints he finally nailed his colours to the mast. A solution to the debt crisis, he said, must start by halving interesting payments by countries heavily in debt, followed by a 50-per-cut in capital claims.

This proposal is based on the realisation that only a radical reduction in the debt burden holds forth any promise of success — as opposed to a constant realignment that merely plunges countries deeper into debt.

Herrhausen's proposal was in effect taken up at the talks between Mexico and its 400 creditor banks all over the world.

These talks were seen as an acid test of the Brady Plan, launched by the United States in a bid to reverse America's debt strategy.

In March US Treasury Secretary Nicholas F. Brady agreed in principle to a reduction in the debt burden.

IMF special drawing rights were to be used to buy back banks' claims at a substantial discount. This discount was the subject of tough bargaining between Mexico and its creditors.

Agreement was reached, again in principle, on a part of Mexico's foreign debts totalling well over $50bn being discounted by 35 per cent in this way.

If this were to happen, Mexico's position would take a perceptible turn for the better. It could then spend much more of its export earnings on investments urgently needed to promote economic development.

It will be a while, however, before we know whether the Brady Plan is really the right solution to the debt problem.

Sceptics feel much more substantial flanking arrangements than have so far been made, both fresh loans and economic policy terms, are needed to back up this debt remission.

If they fail to materialise, the cuts could indeed having very little lasting effect.

The strict economic conditions on which the IMF insists have often proved a sore point. Debtors either agree to abide by them, then tacitly brush them aside, or they are swept aside by the anger of the sections of the population affected.

To infer that this must continue to be the case is nonetheless to go too far. If stringent IMF conditions are combined with less burdensome debts and fresh funds for economically meaningful programmes, the likelihood of them being accepted is far greater than that of the oppressive terms imposed in the past.

This combination would open up a possibility of making economic recovery programmes more socially acceptable than has hitherto been the case.

It is an opportunity that is badly needed inasmuch as the promising start made at the Mexico negotiations would be doomed to failure unless the countries affected were determined to help redress the balance of their finances and slow down the pace of what, almost everywhere, is galloping inflation.

Only a policy that gains the confidence of investors can lead to a way out of the quandary faced by countries deep in debt, especially Latin American states.

Figures recently published by the US Treasury Department speak for themselves. The foreign debts of the 15 countries most deeply in debt total $275bn. Between them they own foreign assets worth $274bn.

If this cash were to flow back into the countries concerned, there would practically no longer be a debt crisis.

But there is no hope of that happening before conditions in general, and the value of money in particular, are stabilised.

Helmut Maier-Mannhart

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 24 July 1989)

Third World debt

Total foreign debt in $ billions: 1982: 831; 83: 894; 84: 933; 85: 1051; 86: 1152; 87: 1281; 88: 1320; 1989 (estimate): 1300

Debts in 1988: Ecuador 11.0; Ivory Coast 14.2; Columbia 17.2; Peru 19.0; Chile 20.8; Morocco 22.0; Jugoslavia 22.1; Philippines 30.2; Nigeria 30.5; Venezuela 35.0; Argentina 59.6; Mexico 107.4; Brazil 120.1

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Acid test for Brady Plan

Nicholas Brady can pat himself on the back. He outlined his plan to solve the Third World's debt crisis last March, shortly after taking over as US Treasury Secretary.

He called for a limited debt remission, thereby heralding a change in Western policy toward the countries concerned.

Despite the sceptics the Paris economic summit reaffirmed the US policy line, and the first Brady Plan debt agreement now seems to have been negotiated.

The talks between Mexico and its creditor banks were seen as a crucial, *acid test of the Brady Plan. Whether the acid test will set a precedent is another* matter.

Even if most of the 450 banks that are owed $54bn by Mexico agree to an SDR-backed debt waiver, there can be no guarantee that negotiations with other debtor countries will achieve the same results.

Terms were agreed wigth Mexico because the Mexicans are felt to be fairly well disposed toward reform. It is doubtful in the extreme whether Brazil or Argentina would be prepared to bail out their economies anywhere near as thoroughly.

Washington leaned heavily on US banks to persuade them to toe the line, yet the terms agreed still leave many questions unanswered.

Whereas Mr Brady insisted on a debt waiver, the banks are now to choose between debt remission, an interest waiver or fresh loans.

Fresh loans are unlikely to foster discipline in the debtor countries where spending money is concerned, economic policy conditions are hard to monitor, and overall debt management is not made easier by the three-option strategy.

Besides, no-one can say here and now whether a 35-per-cent debt remission is going to be enough to get the Third World's economy back on an even keel.

The state of the international economic cycle is yet another uncertain factor. At present the international economy is in full swing, and a downturn would hit the debt-ridden developing countries first and hardest.

Even so, creditors have set aside any illusions that bad debts might ever be repaid in full. But the Brady Plan has yet to pass its real test.

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 25 July 1989)



■ ENERGY

Brussels to take steps to end some cosy, long-standing pricing deals

The European Commission is standing on toes again: it intends breaking up the energy market.

Monopolies of long-standing and cosy pricing and purchasing agreements have to give way to the open competition of the single European market.

But the man-in-the-street will first feel the effects of an unrestricted energy market through the loss of jobs in the mining industry.

Antonio Cardoso e Cunha, the Portuguese Commissioner for Energy, has chosen electric power supplies, of all sectors, for his efforts towards a single European energy market.

Although the Community has an integrated electric power grid, to which unfortunately Greece and Ireland are not yet connected, Mr Cardoso complained last week that the exchange of electric power between EC countries did not yet account for more than four per cent of consumption.

The Commission estimates that the cost of this failure to exchange electric power accounted for 0.5 per cent of the gross EC product or between DM40bn and DM60bn per year.

From mid-1990 Mr Cardoso would like to have right-of-access to all public and private grids in his graduated plan for the single European market.

In a second phase all investment in energy should be notified to Brussels from the very earliest stages of planning, so that Eurocrats can assess the investment's utility for the Community and be able to inform a curious public about it.

Obligation

In a third phase a general obligation will be established to allow electric power to pass through the grid of a third country.

Finally the Commission plans to make it obligatory to inform the Commission of prices for gas and electricity, so that they are available to a wide public.

This is aimed mainly at the customary agreements between electric power stations and major industrial undertakings in the Federal Republic.

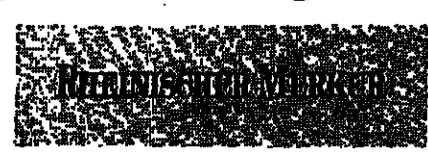
That the Portuguese Commissioner has set himself against all obstacles to a single European energy market, hitting out at the barriers in the electric power section of all areas, has raised the suspicion that his thirst for action has a more national than a European motive.

Seventy-per-cent of France's electric power requirements are provided by nuclear power. The French have a big oversupply of electric power which is offered for export at cheap prices.

Portugal would like to import this cheap power. But Spain lies between France and Portugal and the Spanish are resisting plans to make their grid available.

Last year, without a single European market, the French exported 37 billion kilowatt hours. Their most important market is Germany.

Paris, with the full backing of the Commission, has boxed in its German partners. On the one hand the Commission has complained about German



subsidies for coal: this was in March after the Commission had closed its eyes to the situation for more than a decade. It has demanded that the subsidies be dismantled by the end of 1993.

On the other hand *Länder* without coal, such as Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, as well as major industrial purchasers, will be lured by the single European market.

They will be able to shake off the burden of the "Kohlepfennig," the additional charge on every unit of gas and electricity to aid West German coal against cheaper foreign imports. This distorts competition and over-prices West German energy.

The Commission simplifies things too far when it assumes that electricity can be dealt with just like any other merchandise. In their venture into the electrical power market Eurocrats have shown once more their frightful lack of political finesse.

There is considerable dispute in EC countries about which form of electric power production is preferred in view of environmental considerations and safety.

The Eurocrats, with their proposals, have simply risen above this debate.

Blue-eyed they maintain that the cost of nuclear energy is adequately known and accounted for in the price of electricity.

The question posed by EMP Ralf Linkohr about what the Lloyds of London premium would be to insure against a nuclear accident was simply ignored.

Last year 53 per cent of the Community's electricity supplies came from traditional thermal power stations, 34 per cent from nuclear power and almost 13 per cent from hydraulic and geothermic power.

France obtains 70 per cent of its electric power supplies from nuclear power and Belgium 66 per cent. They are at the top of the league in Europe. Spain follows with 36 per cent and the Federal Republic with 34 per cent.

There are, however, six countries in the EC which have no nuclear power sources of supply.

Under pressure from the Tchernobyl catastrophe the Italians decisively voted in a referendum to do without it.

Will the Commission with its "right-of-access" demands disregard the democratically-expressed wish of the people? Should the Italians just look on as major Italian companies import the unwelcome energy?

It is not easy to find an alternative to nuclear energy which is environmentally-friendly, since scientists have recognised that carbon dioxide contributes considerably to the "Greenhouse Effect" and the destruction of the ozone layer.

Alongside traffic and the heating buildings traditional thermal power stations account for most of the emissions of carbon dixoide in our industrialised society.

Even the Paris economics summit made the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions one of its most important concerns.

Domestic coal has fallen by the wayside not only because of its price but from the viewpoint of environmental protection.

The Commission has pushed all these discussions and considerations aside in its single European energy market initiative, whether these discussions and considerations are based on a purely emotional or national approach. It has given top priority to competition.

The Commission knows full well that fairer competition is only possible if the same safety and environmental protection measures apply to all energy companies in the 12 EC member-states.

The Eurocrats in Brussels seem to be standing just at the beginning of this thorny path to harmonisation.

For quick success they have simply gone about things the wrong way, putting the cart before the Community energy horse.

The 17 Commissioners in Brussels do not concern themselves about the displeasure of citizens, worried about losing their jobs or being subjected to radiation.

They do not need to give people a choice.

Petra Münster

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 21 July 1989)

No alternative to nuclear power, warns agency

The International Energy Agency (IEA), Paris, has asked the Bonn government to safeguard nuclear energy by a "new agreement" with the *Länder* and to end coal subsidies.



IEA executive Helga Steeg, presenting her organisation's report on German energy policy, said that there was no way round nuclear energy.

The IEA was established by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in 1974 as the main energy forum of 22 OECD governments.

The annual report said that there was occasion for "considerable anxiety" in nuclear energy. There was no national agreement about the role of nuclear energy, including the future of the fast-breeder reactor at Kalkar, which was having a negative effect on coal policy.

This had considerable significance for future electric power supplies, the report said.

It welcomed the Bonn government's stand on the re-processing plant at Wackersdorf in Bavaria, Frau Steeg said.

She added that the decision to do without Wackersdorf, and to cooperate with France in re-processing, was a positive step.

In her view it does not matter whether such a facility is built in the Federal Republic but that the re-processing operation is safe.

In addition the Bonn government should speed up the rationalisation of the West German coal-mining industry.

Frau Steeg said that a clear concept must be drawn up "aimed at the dismantling of subsidies and, in the long-term, removing trade barriers."

She said that it was particularly important that the subsidies on coking coal should be removed.

The report said that financial support should also be given to the introduction of "renewable energy sources."

According to Frau Steeg the IEA intends to ensure that far-reaching investigations are made into the future effects of economic growth, environmental protection and energy consumption.

All in all the IEA gave the Bonn government good marks for its energy policies. Germany held first place as a primary energy consumer among European countries and was third among the IEA nations.

Its energy-intensive industry, measured in the relationship of its energy consumption to gross national product, was about nine per cent below the European average.

Germany was very much an energy importer with its 54 per cent of total primary energy consumption.

dpa

(Nordwest Zeitung, Oldenburg, 25 July 1989)

The cost of power

1988 model: converted prices adjusted for respective purchasing powers

Price for private consumers — Cheaper than in Germany: Denmark -22 %, Holland -19, Britain -12; Dearer than in Germany: France +1, Belgium +14, Spain +21, Italy +24 %

Price for industry — Denmark -56 %, France -29, Holland -19, Belgium -17, Britain -15, Italy -5, Spain +12

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■ INDUSTRY

Abandoned nuclear site is now to house factories

Wackersdorf in Bavaria, axed as the site of a controversial nuclear fuel reprocessing plant, is being used as an industrial estate. Part of the site has been snapped up by Munich carmakers BMW, who are to make special vehicles, such as police cars, fire engines and de luxe saloons to special order — and to recycle less controversial scrap materials.

As Mayor Josef Ebner of Wackersdorf walked up the four steps to the door of his *Rathaus*, or town hall, he glanced at the slogan sprayed in black on the pale yellow wall.

It reads *WAA — Arbeit, die tötet* — "N(uclear) R(eprocessing) P(lant) — Work that Kills."

Mayor Ebner has long ignored the slogan, which has defaced the *Rathaus* wall for months. But this morning he looks at it with a wry grin and says: "We can't half count ourselves lucky."

The prospect of jobs — permanent jobs — at last is what he means. They will arguably trigger an economic revival and end for good the confrontation that has split families, including his own, down the middle.

He for one is convinced that a dream has come true for tiny Wackersdorf, tucked away near the border with Czechoslovakia and the GDR.

There had been rumours for several days that a large firm was planning to locate and bring jobs galore to the site of the proposed nuclear fuel reprocessing plant, where work ground to a halt when the controversial project was finally shelved two months ago.

But no-one knew for sure who the new employer was. Those who did, at the Bavarian State Chancellery in Munich, at DWW, the main contracting company, and at BMW, kept the secret.

Mayor Ebner first heard the news on the radio. WAA's place as a prospective employer was to be taken by BMW.

The Munich carmakers had snapped up 47 hectares (122 acres) of the Wackersdorf site and were to hire their first 250 staff next year, with the payroll growing to 1,600 by the mid-1990s.

It may be coincidence. It may be design. But these figures are exactly the manpower targets the proposed nuclear fuel plant was planning to meet.

The figures are clearly still no more than a rough and ready guide to BMW's intentions, which show signs of haste, to put it mildly.

How else is one to account for Professor Walter Sämann, BMW's head of economic planning, asking journalists in Wackersdorf to excuse his inability to supply details of BMW's proposed cash commitment?

"We ourselves know none of the details yet," he said, "but you can work on the assumption that we will be investing several hundred million marks. We start work on planning tomorrow."

He added that it would be a tremendous task. It came in the wake of a most unusual spate of activity undertaken at a speed probably without precedent in German business history.

At BMW's Munich head office there were no immediate expansion plans. A suitable site for a new works was not needed before 1991.

Then, in May, the nuclear processing plant project was axed, leaving 110 hectares (285 acres) fully developed for industrial use in search of a user.

Some users soon materialised. Siemens, the Munich-based electrical engineering giant, and Bayernwerk, the Bavarian power utility, are to manufacture solar cells, generating up to 400 jobs.

Wilden, a local family firm, is to set up a factory employing 500 people to manufacture kitchen whisks and similar equipment.

Numerous enquiries were made but only a handful were from suitable companies.

One was a Japanese firm that planned to manufacture semiconductor supplies for BMW, which would have been most practical because the burgeoning new BMW plant in Regensburg is only a few minutes away by autobahn and the BMW works in Dingolfing and Munich are less than a couple of hours away by truck.

A mere four weeks ago BMW executives began to wonder why they should let everyone else have the run of what, as Professor Sämann readily admits, is the largest fully developed industrial estate in Bavaria, if not in the entire country.

BMW could save itself two years' planning and buy the site at a bargain basement price.

Professor Sämann referred to a "market price" but wasn't prepared to say how much. All he was saying was that in Munich land cost between DM600 and DM1,000 per square metre.

"In Wackersdorf," he said, "it's far less expensive." Which wasn't exactly letting the cat out of the bag.

Walter Weinländer of the holding company that has now been left with the job of marketing the site, is more specific. Market rates in Wackersdorf are between DM10 and DM30 per square metre.

Professor Sämann grudgingly admits that the terms are "good, not to say very good."

He has more to say about what BMW plan to manufacture in Wackersdorf. It won't be an entire new car plant, he says. Wackersdorf might, for instance, manufacture dashboard components for assembly in the company's Regensburg works.

There will also be vehicles made to order, such as police cars and fire engines. Vehicles that "create difficulties at a conventional plant and aren't easy to run along an assembly line," as Professor Sämann puts it.

They will also include armour-plated security vehicles and de luxe saloons for oil sheikhs and their ilk.

BMW also plan to more than experiment with new technologies, such as stripping down old cars to separate glass and plastic for recycling. "Recycling after all," Professor Sämann says: of used cars, not spent nuclear fuel rods.

Another aspect that must not be overlooked was the factor that weighed so heavily in the original project's favour: jobs. "We need manpower to run a factory of this kind," Professor Sämann says.



Atoms out, whisks in: Bavarian Premier Max Streibl (centre) with representatives of kitchen-utensil maker Wilden, new Wackersdorf tenants. (Photo: dpa)

Bavarian Premier Max Streibl had worked out in his Munich office how many jobs he had now succeeded in salvaging for Wackersdorf. He came up with 2,400 so far and felt 3,000 was a realistic target.

When he broke the news to Heribert Späth, head of the standing conference of chambers of artisan trades, his opposite number did not share his glee.

"Where are they going to find the skilled men?" Herr Späth asked. "You can't find them for love or money."

Dieter Hendel of BMW's Regensburg works is unimpressed. He has a payroll of 3,200 and plans to hire a further 3,000 in the years ahead.

Job applications poured in after an advertising campaign in the regional press. Thirty thousand of them.

DWW's Gert Wölfel is convinced that the present trend will be reversed and skilled local men will no longer drift south or west.

Head for Wackersdorf, the old anti-nuclear slogan, has suddenly gained a new meaning.

Understandably, Mayor Ebner has called in a painter to paint over the old anti-nuclear slogan on the *Rathaus* wall. He may well have visions of a BMW as his next official car.

Times have changed in Wackersdorf. Even the anti-nuclear groups aren't what they used to be. Now the nuclear fuel plant they set out to oppose has been axed, they are busy arguing among themselves about another matter that makes the world go round: cash in the kitty.

Life in Wackersdorf really does seem to have returned to normal.

Peter Schmalz

(Die Welt, Bonn, 20 July 1989)

■ **THE ARTS**

Translation subsidies mooted as Bonn flies cultural flag in Australia

This article was written for *Süddeutsche Zeitung* by Gerald Stewart, a Melbourne-based journalist who has also lived and worked in Germany.

State subsidies for translations of German and Australian contemporary literature are being considered by officials in both countries.

The possibility, which emerged in talks between a Bonn Foreign Affairs official and Canberra officials in Australia, would involve cash from state-backed organisations.

The official, Berthold Witte, also made representations to the Australian government about what he called the "prohibitively" high fees foreign students are charged there; he met German-Australian sculptors, artists, musicians and writers at the Goethe Institute in Melbourne; suggested that a publication about German artists and writers in Australia be produced with possible subsidies from Bonn; and announced that Germany is to hold "an important" cultural event every year in Australia.

Herr Witte said a cultural agreement between Canberra and Bonn was not being considered. Canberra did not favour this sort of link with other countries. He regretted that among German post-war writers, only Heinrich Böll and Günter were widely known to Australians.

However, Germans also know little about contemporary Australian writers. The only ones to be translated into German are Patrick White, who won the Nobel Prize in 1973, Thomas Keneally, Morris West and Heather McCulloch. The last two are regarded as popular writers in Germany (a condemnation in German terms.- Ed).

Although no official cultural treaty will be signed, the Australian Labour government wants more active cultural contacts between the two countries. Herr Witte's talks were the first ever cultural talks between the two countries and it is intended that they will now take place every two years.

Witte met Leslie Rowe, chief of the culture division of the Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Ministry, and Max Bourke, director of the Australian Council, a state-backed organisation which finances the arts.

At Witte's suggestion, the council, together with Germany's Inter Nationes, will investigate whether contemporary literature from both countries can be made more accessible by providing state funds for translations.

A colonial state of affairs exists still in the Australian book-trade. Most publishing houses are subsidiaries of London-based publishers. This means that decisions are made in Britain about what can be read in the fifth continent. Australians don't like that.

This is probably why, as Witte suggested, apart from Heinrich Böll and Günter Grass, hardly any post-war German writer is known in Australia.

German-Australia cultural exchanges have always been a one-way street. There is no Australian equivalent in Germany to the Goethe Institute in Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra.

The Goethe Institutes are mainly responsible for the fact that 125,000 Australian pupils and students are learning German, which comes after French in foreign language teaching. Herr Witte: "The stable position of the German language has not been noticeably influenced by the attempts of the Australian government to give more emphasis to the teaching of Asian languages in schools."

German officials in Australia largely agree with the Bonn view that Australia just cannot risk trying to get by only in English, particularly with 1992 and the Single European Market looming.

Australia recognised that to be successful in Europe then would mean mastering German, the language of the strongest European economic power.

Herr Witte said he had objected to the Australian government about the high fees foreign students were charged in Australia.

He hoped it would be possible at least to exempt those German students in Australia on university partnership arrangements.

The number of German students graduating at Australian universities had declined because of the fees. There were about 100 Germans studying in Australia compared with 170 Australian at German universities.

Herr Witte was surprised how much artists of German origin had stimulated the arts in Australia. He had been told that "it is thanks to them that there is a cultural life in Australia at all."

Half a century ago there was not even any pretence that a cultural life existed.

At the Goethe Institute in Melbourne, he met German-Australian sculptors, painters, musicians and writers, including some who had been persecuted by the Nazis. They told him they wanted to maintain contact with Germany.

They said they regretted that there was no standard publication about the work of German artists and writers in Australia. This had had a far greater impact on Australian culture than the work of German-Americans on the culture of the United States.

Herr Witte said that a cultural affairs historian should be commissioned to produce such a book. The commission should preferably go to a German resident in Australia. If possible, Germany would subsidise it.

Herr Witte says there are good reasons for intensifying the cultural relations between Germany and Australia. In spite of many reservations, there was a considerable sympathy for Germany.

German-Australians had a high reputation in Australia; Australia was an important trade and political *partner of*



Germany's; and Australia had had its character moulded by Europe and had similar values as Germany.

This was why Germany would be presented to the Australian public every year as a "really important cultural event."

This autumn an exhibition of German expressionism will be put on in Melbourne and Sydney. A "substantial contribution" will be made to the Sydney Biennale in 1990, and the following year a touring exhibition of German artists of the 1980s would be sent to Australia.

In 1992 Pina Bausch's Dance Theatre from Wuppertal would make guest appearances in Australia and in 1993 an Australia-German co-production of a German opera would be mounted.

He said there was no corresponding Australian presence in Germany. The Australians had not yet come this far.

Gerald Stewart

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 19 July 1989)

Goethe Institute looks east but lack of cash holds it back

At the headquarters of the Goethe Institute officials have watched their worst fears come about over the course of the year.

Institute officials proudly noted in their 1987/1988 Yearbook that the possibilities of "developing in an easterly direction" had gratifyingly increased.

But they suspected even then that this pleasure would be clouded by the fact that it would be difficult setting up appropriate Goethe Institutes, provided with the necessary staff and funds for them to do their job properly.

There are great expectations of the Goethe Institute in the countries of the East Bloc, where an institute has already got established or where one will be opened in the coming months.

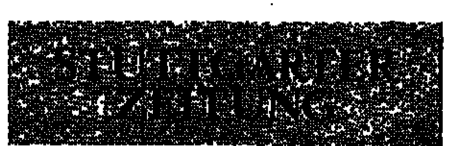
But it is likely that the expectations will be bitterly disappointed, because Bonn does not have enough funds available.

Goethe Institutes have existed in Belgrade and Zagreb in Yugoslavia, and in the Romanian capital, Bucharest, for many years. But they are not able to call themselves Goethe Institutes in Eastern Europe.

Consideration of the German Democratic Republic plays a substantial role in this, it is assumed in Munich. But success does not hang by a name.

There are other countries, such as India, which decline to use the name of the great German poet.

In negotiations with Hungary, the Soviet Union, with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria Federal Republic diplomats have tried to push through the popular name of the institutes with their undisputed good reputation, but they have always been unsuccessful.



This is not depressing Institute officials at the Munich headquarters: first and foremost financial problems are.

There is an understanding for Bonn's economy measures, but the view remains unchanged that the desire to introduce economies should not be taken into account "in the light of the wish for greater cooperation, particularly with the East Bloc."

The Federal Republic is regarded by the people in these countries as a rich state, but the country seems to be on the point of disgracing itself.

The cultural institute, opened in Budapest in 1988, was confronted with a huge demand for German-language instruction. It cannot be met because there is a lack of teachers and teaching materials.

Furthermore the institute is accommodated in a handsome house, which does not meet the space needs of the institute.

It is estimated at headquarters in Munich that in two years at the latest the institute will have to move.

Similar problems occur in Moscow. It is still hoped that the institute there will be able to "inherit" the old German embassy, a palace dating from the times of the czar.

At the end of this year the embassy will move into its new building and then the building could, after renovation, become a handsome address for the representation of German culture.

The requirements for this were set up during the visit to Bonn of Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachov.

It is known that the Soviet institute will be set up in Stuttgart. Goethe Institute officials are confident that they will soon be able to begin work in Warsaw and Sofia.

Negotiations with Czechoslovakia are still continuing, but in Munich there is optimism about what will be the outcome. But it is true to say that the personnel and materials for these establishments are a headache to officials at Goethe Institute headquarters in Munich, and to the Foreign Affairs Ministry, responsible for arts policy abroad.

Early in the year a plan setting out staff and material requirements was drawn up in Munich, which took into account not only the requirements of Eastern Europe. In Munich it is regarded as unfortunate that the Goethe Institutes in North America, for example, are inadequately represented.

At last a Goethe Institute will be set up in Washington and the institutes in Seattle and Vancouver extended.

But Goethe Institutes have empty spaces on their cultural policy maps: in Spain, southern Africa and in the Middle East.

Goethe Institute officials calculated that it would need to recuit 172 additional personnel in the four years between 1990 and 1993 for the Goethe Institutes being set up in Eastern Europe and elsewhere.

This included 32 backup personnel at headquarters in Munich. The more institutes that are in operation abroad the greater the administrative demands on headquarters.

In this medium-term plan 63 posts have been allocated for 1990. The Goethe Institute can only reckon with nine new posts.

It is imagined that in Moscow a Bonn-financed cultural institute will come into being that in size and facilities will be on a par with Goethe Institutes in London, Paris, New York or Tokyo.

The institute in Warsaw will turn out to be relatively large as well, caused by a special aspect of this establishment.

Politicians have requested that the Warsaw institute should not be called just a cultural institute but use the long-winded title "Institute for Culture and Scientific-Technological Information."

Continued on page 11

■ **FILMS**

Fundamentalism shoots it out down by the bus terminal

Volker Schlöndorff is filming Margaret Atwood's bestseller, *The Handmaid's Tale*, in Raleigh, North Carolina. The script has been written by Harold Pinter.

It is a fascinating venture into the near future when sexism has gone to extremes and fundamentalist religion controls the state.

The bus terminal was closed the day I was there. Two of the roads leading to it were closed off.

Two women wearing simple, red garments crossed the street. Opposite, high up on the walls, bodies still dangled from the gallows. One was a women in a red dress.

The next moment a car parked on the street exploded. Its roof rose into the air and the wreck burst into blazing flame.

Men wearing battle dress poured out from every corner armed with automatic weapons, and began firing indiscriminately. The street, once so quiet, was suddenly alive.

After two minutes, it was over. The police began smoking cigarettes. The fire was put out. There was a break. Everyone went for lunch.

The small, balding man turned towards me. Schlöndorff was shooting his first American film for cinemas. He had prepared the ground for it mainly with his enormously successful *The Tin Drum*.

His filming of great works of literature by Musil, Yourcenar, Böll and Proust have won him critical acclaim if less so among a wide public.

In America he began with two films for insatiable television. Now he has $10 million available to film *The Handmaid's Tale*.

His producer is an experienced film man, also originating from Germany, Wolfgang Glattes, born in Wilhelmshaven, at school in Essen and now at home in Hollywood.

The book by the successful novelist Margaret Atwood, takes place in a puritanical-totalitarian, near future.

Environmental catastrophes have taken their toll. Most women are infertile. The few who can bear children are turned over to the powerful commanders. They must bear children conceived without love.

The human and political conflict develops from this. This is what has attracted Schlöndorff.

"Everyone thinks that I am interested in this material because of its political dimension. But that is not so. The political fable is as simple as in Orwell.

"The other level of the story is much more interesting, dealing with the surrogate mother. This is the level which interests me, which also interests Harold Pinter, who has written the script," Schlöndorff said.

He explained that the story dealt with a young woman, played by Natasha Richardson, Vanessa Redgrave's daughter, who comes to an established married couple. She is to bear a child for the wife who is infertile, but then the husband naturally falls in love with the young woman. His wife is jealous, but she still wants the child.

Then she has the suspicion that it is her husband who is sterile, for in this patriarchal society only women are tested, not the men, as it was in the 19th century in Europe and as it still is today in Arabia. Whenever a marriage is childless it is assumed the fault lies with the woman.

Schlöndorf explained: "This is why the chauffeur arrives so that the surrogate mother can have a surrogate father. Everything which develops in relationships between people is interesting. All the rest is just dressing.

"It is the case that a futuristic parable is needed to be able to digest what is still too hot off the press."

Apart from Natasha Richardson, Schlöndorff has a crowd of stars available for his film.

Robert Duvall plays the elderly commandant, who falls in love with the girl. He is one of the most versatile actors in films and on the stage today.

Faye Dunaway plays his wife in the film; she is famous for her role in *Bonny and Clyde*.

Schlöndorff praised not only his stars but his whole enthusiastic team: "There is a sense of direct participation and a capacity for enthusiasm, which sceptical Europeans have long lost. This is why it is much more fun, because one has the feeling that it still makes a difference to them how a thing is done, and they are very industrious, very ready to learn and primarily not know-alls."

But Schlöndorff does not intend to limit or concentrate his work on the USA. He sees himself as a citizen of the world, a traveller round the globe, "like an opera singer, like a journalist."

A Max Frisch project is luring him for his next production, the *Homo Faber*. He wants to produce opera again as well. "I shall commute. I don't have a clear plan of my life."

Then he concentrated once more on the job in hand under North Carolina's sun. The production moved to there because it is much cheaper to film in the provinces than in expensive Hollywood.

Time was pressing. From Sunday evening to Monday morning the bus station must be back to the way it was.



A simple political fable . . . director Schlöndorff. (Photo: Concorde-Film)

The walls with the executed people will then be moved. Margaret Atwood had brought with her from Berlin the idea for this. She had begun her story there.

"The tale is a mixture of German fascism, much from Argentina and a touch of England in the Middle Ages. She wants to put people down in a transformed present. Just imagine, here would be Argentina, here would be Berlin."

dorff has come to this just at the right time. "We are placing the film close to the present." Then he turned back to the grim future of his film, a story about love, death, renunciation and violence.

Siegfried Maruhn

(General-Anzeiger, Bonn, 17 July 1989)

Continued from page 10

It will have available for all users a data terminal, through which it will be possible to link up with West German data banks.

Officials in Munich are regarding with composure the technical and organisational difficulties which this special form of institute will pose.

Visitors to the new cultural institutes in Eastern Europe expect not just attractive cultural programmes and satisfactory courses in the German language. Experience has shown that the reputation of an institute stands or falls by a well-stocked library. This applies particularly to the institutes in Eastern Europe.

A Goethe Institute report states that in negotiations with the Poles and the Hungarians considerable emphasis was placed on the provision of information in the natural sciences and technology.

Despite various difficulties raised by the Romanian government the library in the Bucharest institute has been given considerable encouragement.

Sten Martenson

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 7 July 1989)

A producer who had an eye for the creative team

Discussion about films usually centres on directors and their stars, rarely about producers. But without the producer not much could happen.

There are artistically important producers who have written their names into film history but who, nevertheless, are not well known.

One of the great film producers was Erich Pommer, born 100 years ago in Hildesheim. He was around during the important, now legendary, years of the Ufa film studios.

He is associated with films, which influenced later generations, films such as *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*, *Der Kongress tanzt* and *The Blue Angel*.

His post-war film, *Kinder, Mutter und ein General*, won critical acclaim but little public attention. But that did not harm Erich Pommer, who had been head of productions at Ufa. In the mid-1950s he bowed out of producing altogether. He died in 1966, aged 76, in Los Angeles.

In 1915 he set up the Decla company, which was merged into Ufa in 1923. The company's first film was a melodrama entitled *Der Glaube siegt* or *Wenn die Lawinen stürzen*.

His prime talent was spotting talent and setting up creative film teams. In 1918 he called Fritz Lang to Berlin. They were friends for life and had a working relationship in which Pommer gave Lang a free hand for the creation of his "not-always-cheap fantasies."

Then Robert Wiene from the "Pommer stable" caused a furore for Decla with *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*. The film, starring Conrad Veidt and Werner Krauss, was an international success.

It was also epoch-making, "an eerie cinema fantasy, a nightmare of a madman," as the American writer Upton Sinclair described it. There was talk of it being a "film manifesto of German expressionism."



Clever talent spotter . . . producer Pommer. (Photo: dpa)

Due to that film Pommer was connected with Lang's later film, *Metropolis*, a milestone in film history for Lang's expressionistic, utopian vision of horror about technical progress and the suppression of people.

Brigitte Helm played her first role in *Metropolis*, which was the most expensive silent German movie ever made.

Yet it did not achieve the success hoped for; it forced Ufa into a difficult position. Pommer had to leave.

Pommer was given a new contract in 1927 as head of Erich Pommer Productions. Soon *The Blue Angel* was making the headlines.

La Jana and Brigitte Helm were both considered for the role of Lola-Lola, but director Josef von Sternberg was adamant — he wanted the young Berlin actress, Marlene Dietrich.

During the politically disturbed last days of the Weimar Republic, Pommer produced a series of entertaining films which were a success at the box office. They included *Liebling der Götter* with Renate Müller, *Die drei von der Tankstelle* with Heinz Rühmann, *F.P.1 antwortet nicht* with Hans Albers and *Der Kongress tanzt* with Lilian Harvey and Willy Fritsch.

After the Nazis came to power Ufa decided to cancel, when the opportunity arose, contracts with Jewish employees. This involved Pommer.

He left Germany and produced films such as *Liliom* and *Jamaica Inn* in France, Britain and the USA.

Pommer returned to Germany in 1945 as an American citizen and headed the revival of the studios in Berlin's Tempelhof and Geiselgasteig in Munich.

He was once more active as a producer; to name some of his productions, *Nachts auf dem Strassen* with Hans Albers and Hildegard Knef, and finally in 1954/1955 *Kinder, Mutter und ein General* with Therese Giehse.

Pommer was involved in all in 225 titles. Just before his death he said about German post-war films that "if it were not so sad it would be amusing to watch how the German film industry, despite the Economic Miracle, is capable of wasting the many opportunities which are handed to it at the present on a golden platter." *W. Mommert/dpa*

(Westdeutsche Allgemeine, Essen, 21 July 1989)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Pesticides in drinking water are here to stay until farming habits change

People usually start worrying about the damage they do to the environment when it is almost too late.

North Sea pollution only hit the headlines when seals died en masse and their corpses were washed ashore on holiday resort beaches.

Pollution of the Rhine, which had been going on for years, only attracted attention when fish died after a fire at a pharmaceuticals factory in Basle, Switzerland.

Much the same can be said of the tapwater we use without a second thought, not just to drink but to wash the car or to spray the lawn.

Yet the increase in ground water pollution by insecticides and other chemicals with which cash crops are sprayed *ought* to worry us all.

Germany is in the fortunate position of having plenty of water.

The estimated five billion cubic metres of water used annually by domestic and industrial consumers comes from 28 billion cubic metres of ground water.

But intensive fertilisation of farmland has resulted in little or no water not being polluted in one way or another.

Federal Environment Minister Klaus Töpfer, CDU, has often said that our aim must be to stop feeding pesticides and nitrates into the ground water, but this is an aim that has long ceased to be realistic.

So the authorities have been left with no choice but to make very low pollution ceilings mandatory. From October the limit will be 0.1 microgram of an individual pesticide per litre, or 0.5

Frankfurter Allgemeine

micrograms of a combination of substances.

This is the equivalent of a lump of sugar in the holds of a supertanker. It is virtually the smallest quantity that can be identified using the latest laboratory equipment.

It was specified because pesticides are generally felt to be carcinogenic, and health risks were to be ruled out whatever happened.

There have since been several clashes with the Opposition, which argues that pesticides and nitrates in these quantities are still sufficiently dangerous to need banning.

This demand would seem absurd against the background of a European common agricultural policy that makes countries keen to produce ever larger quantities of foodgrain and other crops.

A total ban on pesticides and fertilisers is also inconceivable because population growth is so dramatic that politicians have no choice but to consider how best to feed the world's billions better.

Farmers' unions will hear nothing of a threat to the ground water but they too are wondering what can be done.

An "integrated agriculture" pep group has warned that near-zero ceilings or total bans would restrict the farmers' possibilities of devising strategies to limit the damage. Crops must be grown in combination as a natural means of pest control. Besides, all farmers are said to have a vested interest in ensuring that expensive fertiliser boosts plant growth and doesn't just seep into the ground.

That may be true, but in day-to-day work farmers are in no real position to measure up to the demands made upon them.

Every soil and each plant needs a different fertiliser. Modern farmers are at times seen hacking away at pocket calculators in a bid to work out the right fertiliser dosage for a given field.

Yet most farmers still go by the rule of thumb "better too much than too little." The more the better and, as a result, ground water pollution has not been reduced to the extent required.

Federal Health Minister Ursula Lehr, CDU, is worried lest between 10 and 20 per cent of German water boards are unable to comply with the new standards in October.

She is prepared to grant them temporary exemptions in respect of specific toxin counts and subject to improvement schedules.

It is hard to say whether these transitional arrangements will be enough. Frau Lehr is right in fearing serious water supply shortages unless provision is made for a change for the better.

At the Environment Ministry and among the Opposition fears have been voiced that exemptions may take the cutting edge off the strict limits envisaged from October.

Some scientists feel the new limits are too strict in any case, being geared to what is technically feasible rather than to what makes health sense.

At this point the debate becomes a dispute between scientists that leaves the layman way out of his depth. It is, moreover, a dispute which shows that an opportunity of ruling out water pollution entirely has been missed.

A substance that has once found its way into the ground water can never be filtered out entirely.

So Germans will continue to have to drink pesticide in their tapwater, no matter how infinitesimal the toxin count. That is the price we must pay for pursuing agricultural policies geared to what is possible rather than to what makes sense.

Health Ministry exemptions can only be a stopgap solution. All arrangements will be to no avail unless farmers change their minds and agree to spread less fertiliser.

Carl Graf Hohenthal

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 19 July 1989)

Continued from page 6

which working hours could be arranged with distinctions made where necessary.

The Green Party took up a more forthright stance. The party has also introduced a draft working hours law. It is strongly against an extension to working at the weekend.

The Bonn government's draft legislation only bans working on Sundays with the exceptions laid down in the Industrial Code.

All three proposals are already between 18 months and two years old. None of the parties are making a move to speed up the process of legislating on this.

An official from the Labour Ministry, explaining why nothing was happening, said: "The matter is too dicey. Nothing will happen on this before the next general election."

Matthias Pletke

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 15 July 1989)

Plagues of algae in the North Sea and the Adriatic, oil slicks off Alaska and California, drums of toxic chemicals leaking from a freighter off the German coast. Man-made maritime pollution through waste disposal is an increasingly serious problem. Causes and effects were outlined at a Munich symposium held by the Radiation and Environmental Research Establishment (GSF).

A tasty recipe for a stinking squelch of toxic algae

Algae are reported in profusion in the Atlantic, off the coast of Brittany, and in the North Sea, off the North or East Frisian islands, depending on wind direction.

Unlike last year, reports this summer are of both microscopic algae and larger varieties inches or even yards long.

Carpets of algae drifting along Italy's Adriatic coastline also include intestinal bacteria — a sure sign of faeces that surfaced on the North Sea coast last summer.

The causes of this plague of algae are no secret: surplus fertiliser washed from fields and down rivers into the sea, detergent-rich domestic sewage that finds its way down to the sea in much the same manner and nitric gases borne aloft in the atmosphere.

These three are accompanied by a constant inflow of chemicals of all kinds and in almost any quantity, with biological effects that range from harmless to highly toxic.

This steady pollution supply is periodically joined by peak pollution caused by tanker and oil rig or oil platform accidents and freighters with dangerous cargoes that run into difficulties.

So there was every reason for the Radiation and Environmental Research Establishment (GSF) to hold a seminar in Munich on "The Sea: Waste Dump or Living Environment?"

Ulrich Geffarth, one of the experts invited to attend the Munich symposium, felt this was the wrong question. Man had always used his surroundings as both a living environment and a waste disposal facility.

Archaeologists have always found this habit most convenient. The kitchen midden alongside prehistoric human settlements has frequently proved most revealing.

Waste disposal was a subject on which no-one lost any sleep until a few years ago. We can no longer afford to be so happy-go-lucky.

"Population growth and people's growing expectations," Geffarth says, "make it essential to rethink and to devise counter-strategies."

This too is nothing new, yet environmental pollution is tending to increase, not decrease, in global terms.

And that is why algae are as much of a nuisance on the North Sea coast as they are on the Adriatic even though about 90 per cent of Germans have mains water and drainage with access to sewage purification plant.

DIE WELT

Eighty-five per cent of sewage that flows into the Mediterranean is, in contrast, untreated. A quarter of the Mediterranean's bathing beaches are already off limits on health grounds.

Sewage and effluent produced by the 250 million people who live on the Mediterranean and by rivers that flow into the Med are not the only offenders.

The Mediterranean is one of the world's busiest waterways, and oil pollution for which shipping is to blame is correspondingly serious.

Overfertilisation of coastal waters and inland seas can cause more than a mere profusion of existing algae; the varieties of algae produced vary too.

As a rule a carpet of algae in the North Sea consists mainly of diatoms, with an admixture of flagellates.

The unnatural proliferation of nutrient has reversed the ratio, with diatoms halved and flagellates up sixfold in number.

This shift in emphasis is not limited to algae. Similar changes are taking place among seabed creatures.

A number of mussels that used to flourish in the mudflats are now seriously affected by parasites, while sea-grass meadows are declining in size. Individual toxins or pollutants can seldom be blamed. The sea as a living environment is too complex for simple equations of this kind.

"The sum total of these ecological deviations," says Volkert Dethlefsen of the Federal Fishery Research Institute, Cuxhaven, "can no longer be accounted for by fluctuation within a natural bandwidth."

Few scientists are prepared to be so definite. Most, with the case in point in mind, say: "There could be a connection, but we can't prove there is one."

Fish in areas where low-grade acid effluent is pumped into the sea tend to have more skin ulcers than fish elsewhere.

Yet even Dethlefsen says this acid isn't necessarily to blame. It isn't mere coincidence, however. If it were, there would be more coincidences in the North Sea than one might statistically expect.

German operators are to stop pumping acid effluent into the North Sea at the end of the year, so we shall see whether the health bill of fish in the areas in question takes a turn for the better.

Yet low-grade acid effluent will continue to be produced as a waste product of titanium dioxide manufacture.

In future it is to be treated on terra firma, with incineration following several preliminary treatments in expensive disposal facilities.

But incineration has toxic waste products too. They can't be recycled and will need to find a final resting place of their own.

Rolf H. Latusseck

(Die Welt, Bonn, 20 July 1989)

BIOTECHNOLOGY

Bill has inadequate safety provisions, say critics

The golden age of biology seems inexorably imminent. The Federal government is certainly unable to resist the blandishments of genetic engineering.

The Genetic Engineering Bill, a 50-page draft just approved by the Federal Cabinet, endorses genetic engineering.

Whether biotech emerges as a trump in the chemical industry's hand is another matter. Environmentalists in all political parties seem sure to lodge vigorous protests, especially as the Bill includes a step in the wrong direction on safety.

Since September 1988 planning permission, with a full public inquiry, has been required for genetic engineering production facilities.

This was agreed unanimously by the Bundesrat as part of the fourth set of regulations issued in connection with the Static Emission Act.

The new Bill envisages public hearings only from a certain safety level onward. This categorisation of unforeseeable risks is both dubious and dangerous.

The accepted safety approach in respect of genetic engineering by drugs manufacturers is fairly straightforward, as US biologists noted only last year.

They disproved the theory, advocated for decades, that the combination of a harmless organism and a harmless gene could in itself only be something harmless.

In laboratory experiments a bacterium that is rated safe suddenly changed its properties after 75 days.

Mutation by "safe breeds" of this kind was previously felt, by the majority of genetic research scientists, to be inconceivable.

One reason why they felt so safe and sure is likely to have been because the principle of simple addition of risks was so reassuring.

The officials who drafted the Bonn Bill were either unaware of this shadow that has been cast on the optimistic safety theories propounded by genetic engineers — or chose to ignore it.

The Federal Health Ministry, which was entrusted with responsibility for genetic engineering two years ago, would otherwise have found its entire compromise concept to have been floored.

The Research Ministry had previously been in charge of biotech, but responsibility was transferred to the Health Ministry on party-political grounds.

Be that as it may, the officials who drafted the Bill sought to square the circle in an attempt to allow industry as free a hand as possible while ensuring the greatest possible degree of safety from potential risks.

The result is a patchwork that can satisfy no-one. Environment Minister Klaus Töpfer is reputed to have prevented the draft from granting genetic engineering *carte blanche*.

One point on which he has insisted is that the Federal Health Agency can only authorise nursery experiments with varieties of plant that have undergone genetic manipulation subject to the Federal Environment Protection Agency's approval.

If he had failed even to ensure acceptance of this minimum requirement the name the Bill has been given by cynics would have been not far short of the truth: Bill to Protect Genetic Engineering from the General Public.

Most safety provisions so far envisaged are mere window-dressing. The Bill expressly refers, for instance, to "the unforeseeable risk, in a number of cases, in handling organisms that have undergone genetic changes."

This is a reference to the risk inherent even in "closed systems," such as drug manufacture. Yet no mention is made of environmental safety regulations in respect of industrial waste disposal.

The draft fails to explain why no such requirement is stipulated, but this inconsistency is doubtless attributable to a facile belief in progress.

The authors of the Bundestag commission of inquiry's report on "Opportunities and Risks of Genetic Engineering" similarly succumbed to some degree to the tempting vision of a brave new world.

But the Bill paints a glossy picture reminiscent of an advertising brochure. Manipulated microbes will one day eat their way through oil slicks on the seven seas and guzzle dioxin on toxic waste dumps.

Cash crop plants from the biotech drawing board hold forth the prospect of super-yields in the Third World (even though only industrialised countries will be able to afford the patented new varieties).

The rules of the "Eighth Day of Creation" are to be laid down by a department at the Federal Health Agency, the central commission on biological safety.

Its writ will run on disputes over new projects. But its decisions are to be reached behind closed doors, and this secrecy seems sure to be a bone of contention in the Bundestag.

Secrecy is totally unsuitable as a means of creating confidence in the crucial control agency. Is it planned as a means of gagging criticism by concerned scientists of controversial new projects planned by pharmaceuticals manufacturers?

Secrecy seems sure to foster criticism among the sceptics, which may be why a number of biotech advocates are already saying superfluous skirmishes may result.

How the commission arrives at its rulings is one matter; another, even trickier one is who is to serve on it.

Ten of the 12 members are active in genetic engineering and will thus be laying down guidelines for their own work.

The standards they set and the limits they impose will be binding on the chemical industry, which is their main source of research funds.

Critics at the Federal Health Agency are reluctant to accuse members of the commission of preparing to help themselves along self-service store lines.

But they have politely asked the Health Ministry whether legal safeguards for genetic engineering ought to be drafted, wholly or in part, by experts who might stand to benefit from the decisions they reach.

The Ministry has yet to answer this query.

Marianne Quoirin

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 20 July 1989)

Aim to rule out any Brave New World

Human embryos and genetic stock must be protected from biotech manipulation, the Federal government has decided. The Bonn Cabinet has approved draft legislation banning genetic manipulation and cloning of the human embryo, the breeding of mutants combining human and animal properties and, incidentally, the use of surrogate mothers.

Foetal research is to be permitted providing it does the embryo no harm. Extra-marital artificial insemination is to be permitted, but not to be paid for by health insurance schemes.

These are the details of the Bill presented by Federal Justice Minister Hans Engelhard. Objections were promptly raised by the Social Democrats and Greens; the Bavarian CSU, a member of the Bonn coalition, also objected.

Free Democrat Engelhard said the Bill's aim was to ensure that the "unbounden opportunities" of genetic engineering and procreative medicine were not missed while at the same time reducing to a minimum the virtually unforeseeable risks they involved.

Action, he said, was definitely needed to lay the ghost of breeding Brave New World babies. Human genetic manipulation was to be banned, with penalties of up to five years in prison.

The second part of the Bill deals with surrogate motherhood. Doctors who play a part in the process, by implanting an alien ovum or carrying out artificial insemination, face up to three years in prison. Donors and surrogate mothers will not be liable to prosecution.

Artificial insemination will continue to be legal, even extra-marital insemination. Herr Engelhard made it clear that the FDP had prevailed with its objections to making artificial insemination a criminal offence.

The Cabinet has authorised the Labour Ministry to draft legislation to ensure that health insurance schemes pay for test-tube babies only when the sperm and the ovum are from husband and wife. Singles, unmarried couples and married couples who need to rely on an outside sperm donor will have to pay for the procedure themselves.

The bill bans the deliberate breeding of human embryos for research. Where a test-tube baby is the aim, only as many ova as are needed may be inseminated.

If embryos "superfluous to requirements" result, research is only to be permitted if it does them no harm. Offenders will face up to three years in prison.

To ensure that these bans are heeded, artificial insemination is only to be permitted at specific research facilities.

The Bill has been opposed not only by the SPD and the Greens, the Opposition in the Bonn Bundestag, but by the CSU, a member of the ruling coalition.

The CSU's Hermann Fellner said his party could not agree to legislation that sanctioned extra-marital insemination or artificial insemination by a donor other than the woman's husband.

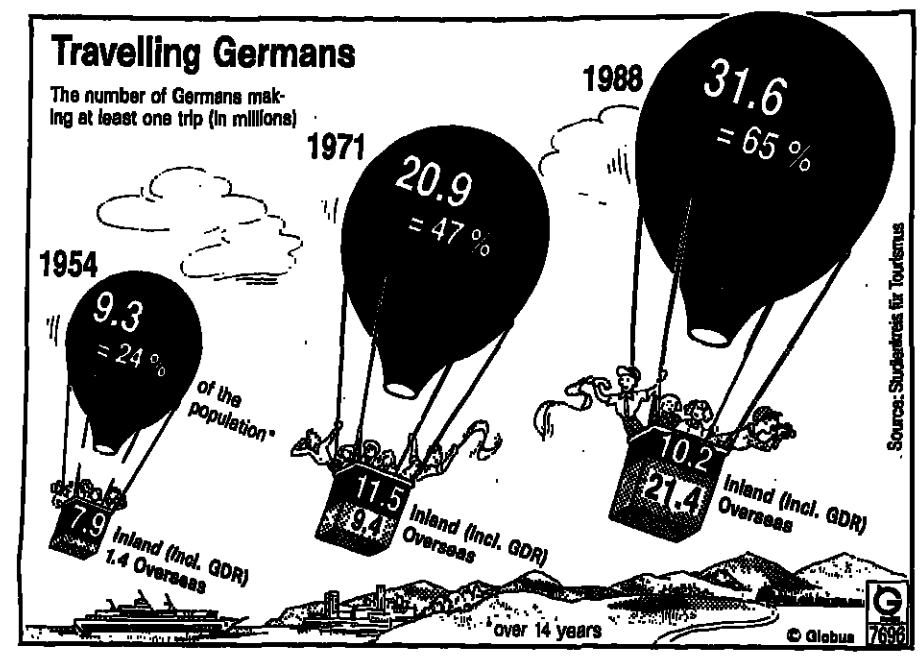
The SPD's Renate Schmidt said both civil law and ethical aspects of artificial insemination were ignored. Besides, protection of human genetic stock was not satisfactorily guaranteed in view of the exceptions envisaged.

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 20 July 1989)

■ HOLIDAYS

It's good fun if you can stand the slime

REPORT: A slimy coat of algae and dead seals is spread along coastlines of islands in the North Sea. Tourists are keeping away from the putrid beaches. REPORT: Thousands of tons of phosphates and nitrogen taken down the river Po into the Adriatic have resulted in a slimy scum polluting *some of northern Italy's most* popular tourist centres. Rainer Möller reports for *Saarbrücker Zeitung* on the travails of the holiday industry.



Our environment is pretty grim news at any time. The series of catastrophes and accidents over the years don't need to be catalogued to illustrate that. Many incidents remain strong in the memory — those which have been near enough to cause direct concern.

Others are forgotten or become just distant memories — they happened thousands of miles away. Sensitivity is in inverse proportion to distance. It was always to be reckoned with that one day the bill for the damage caused by man to the environment would be presented. But man had never quite believed how big that bill would be.

Today's tourist, keeping himself from lithe and awake by performing a few calisthenics on the roadside as his car sits in an immobile tailback kilometres long in the clogged holiday traffic (direction, if not movement: south) in the summer would never ever think that he, as a member of a highconsuming, western industrialised nation, might be contributing to the death of mass tourism.

But that is what is just around the corner, if the message from daily news on television, radio and newspapers is to be believed.

Filthy beaches in Minorca, algae infestations in the North and Baltic Seas, swimming bans because of the lousy water in parts of the Adriatic. Politicians still are afraid of speaking out because official recognition of the plight of the seas would have wide-ranging legal consequences.

We seem to have collectively done it again. Concerted action between tourists from central Europe and the managers at holiday centres seems to have succeeded in turning resorts into places where people no longer want to go.

It has been coming for a long time. Insiders with any sort of nous have been fearing exactly this. But a steadily increasing amount of special offer holidays has ensured that the industry has continued to grow.

So it could only be a matter of time before nature itself called for a halt. Where millions want to go swimming, the waters are spoiled by biological effluent. Sections of the coasts of Italy, Spain and north Germany are typical examples.

In southern countries, building purification plants — a long-term process in any case — would not readily solve the problem because of the sheer amount of phosphates and agricultural fertiliser residue from the interior.

Beaches become filthy, blue seas become filthy, and suddenly all that investment in tourist regions loses value.

The question is what to do. Can the stream of tourists be re-directed away from the coasts to areas less affected by pollution? Limits could be set for density — so many people per hectare of beach. A start to the building of purification plant should begin quickly.

We can also do much. For example, holidays can be spread over a wider period (instead of being jammed into July and August as is common in Europe). Holidays for both school pupils and workers could be better arranged. This would help to shorten autobahn traffic jams and help avoid accidents.

To release the load on tourist areas, there should be efforts to find a solution which gets away from the idea of growth.

The coasts and oceans should already serve as a warning of what might happen if one day the alpine regions are overrun. One day, the bottom will fall out of the tourist industry there, as well.

Rainer Müller

(Saarbrücker Zeitung, 17 July 1989)

Lots of special offers in a non-boom year

Never have there been so many "last-minute" and "save-money" holiday offers as this summer. People who have not yet booked have the choice of any number of cut-price offers at their travel bureau.

After two record years, bookings in the tourist year which ends at the end of October have been modest. A few operators report growth but the industry as a whole reports no significant increase in business.

Various reasons are *put forward:* foreign trips, which make up *67 per* cent of trips, have become slightly disadvantageous because of the weakening mark. The dollar has climbed steeply and, in various countries, the mark is not holding up as well against the local currency as a few years ago.

This affects especially Spain, the destination in between 40 and 50 per cent of all overseas holidays offered in Germany. The increasing cost of living there is deterring many from going there.

Another reason is too many people. In some countries, coastal areas have been so densely built to cater for masses of tourists that you can hardly see the sea for the concrete. Then there are service problems and political problems — Rumania, Jugoslavia and China are three examples.

Cars preferred

On the other hand, there is still demand for holidays in Cuba, Kenya and South East Asia. Tour operators are also satisfied with the car-holiday and holiday-home sides of the business. This year, many Germans have decided not to fly anywhere but, instead, to take their car.

The biggest German operator is TUI (Touristik Union International). In the year to the end of *October* 1988, it handled holidays for 2.8 *million* people.

In the first six months of *the current* year, bookings had not quite reached the level of the equivalent for the previous year.

It was much better at NUR Touristik GmbH (which is better known by its popular name of Neckermann) which, with 1.4 million bookings in the previous year was the second biggest operator in the country.

Manager Herbert Kratz: "We did better in the winter and are doing better this summer.

It looks as if at the end of the year we will have improved business by between six and eight per cent."

ITS, another major operator *with* more than 910,000 customers, estimates that a slight improvement of between two and three per cent is to be expected.

The industry is pleased that turnover is climbing more strongly than bookings. What the rash of special offers will result in is not yet clear.

After increases respectively of about 12 and eight per cent in the number of people travelling in the past two years, the industry regards the current breather as being not too bad.

Dietrich Bosing/dpa

(General-Anzeiger, Bonn, 15 July 1989)

Riley still with lotus eaters

The heady atmosphere of holidays often causes people to do what they would really like to do in life if it were only possible. The tourist industry tries to find out what these wishes are — and there is nothing secret about them — because fulfilling wishes is its business.

The supplier of the holiday product "Austria", which is the relevant tourist authority there, has assessed the state of the German soul and has decided to add a few whorls to its advertising programme. The changes are mainly aimed at people between 20 and 40. The codeword is hedonism. What is to be catered for is the yearning to enjoy life.

The holiday strategy is to fulfil these yearnings without making any moral judgements. Yet they haven't managed to create a golden age where more people spend more time thinking about their holiday arrangements than about their work — people are too concerned about keeping or losing their jobs.

This increasingly hedonistic attitude to life is more than the sub-conscious welling-up of a holiday dream. People whose aim in life it is to be spoiled probably want to live the same way in their day-to-day existence — that means nothing too exhausting, that's if it can be managed through either work or inheritance.

Tourist organisers are naturally delirious over the prospect of a 32-hour week by the Year 2010 and the result that even more leisure time would then be organised. People would want to use this new freedom in an intact environment and to experience it in full command of their physical capabilities.

There is the desire to live socially, best in cliques, to enjoy an "enjoyment-oriented existence," to laze without having a bad conscience about it, and yet at the same time, to be "more active."

Such mental wanderings touch upon all possible interests including sporting and handiwork hobby horses. The theme is "a more aware life" for development of both self and personality. Creativity and relaxation are to be given the same weight as broadening the knowledge. These then are the patterns out of which holiday offers would be formed.

The thinking goes that, if a person works shorter hours then the need for recuperation will decline and be replaced with the desire for the "joy of change, sensation and freedom from restraint." The interest in a "fit body for sport and play" would become in general more important as the drive for performance at work goes into decline.

But is this really how it will be? Can the projection of working hours be squared with the actual time a person who, for example, is ambitious to carve out a career, would have to spend at work? The contradictions in a performance-oriented society are unrelenting.

Certainly, in every society the yardstick of performance can be in general reduced; and if play becomes more important than work it would mean that the criteria for all of us will have changed.

Have we already come that far? In a wealthy society there are always footloose people and/or people earning enough money who can be described as "young, dynamic, active, aesthetic, geared to the spirit of the age, modern and attractive."

But those who have families cannot compete, no matter how much this dream world glistens with attractions embellished with words from the English language: "River-Rafting" and "Hydrospeed , Mountain-Biking und Paragliding" (or, in the winter, "Swingbo, Snowboard und Mono-Ski.").

The tourist industry has naturally not asked it customers political questions. But the answers it has received could be vested with political significance if, one day there are more leisure days than working days.

In that case, it would have to be asked if these days of plenty should be used to serve one's own interests or if just a tiny corner should remain for the benefit of others.

In any case, if too many members of a society want to spend their days blissfully dozing, then it perhaps is an omen for that self-same society.

Georg Kleemann

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 7 July 1989)

■ HORIZONS

Putting the boot in: footwear down the ages

Footwear has always been a reflection of the life-styles of the times, whether sandals, running pumps or smart Italian shoes.

In the past shoes were also more than just articles for everyday use, whether they were the leather sandals of the Greeks, the pointed shoes and clogs of the Middle Ages or the stiletto shoes of the present.

An exhibition has been opened in Hauenstein in the district of Primasens entitled "Zum Beispiel Schuhe" (Shoes, for example), showing the history of footwear from the distant past to the present day.

There are more than a 1,000 exhibits in the Hauenstein exhibition, once the largest shoe village in Germany. Most of these exhibits come from the Bally Museum in Switzerland.

The Frankfurt-based "Institut Objekte Kultur" has organised the exhibition, which has already been put on at Bochum, Heidelberg and Zürich. The selection of the small village of Hauenstein with a population of 4,500 as a venue for the exhibition was deliberate.

The village represents as no other location does the rise and fall of the German shoe industry in this century.

Like so much in our culture the world has to thank the Greeks for the art of shoemaking. According to legend the Greek God Hermes delivered his messages wearing golden, winged sandals.

With a distinct awareness of the body the Greeks carefully shaped shoes for the left and right foot differently.

By the time of the Romans this anatomical refinement in shoe-making was lost. Until well into the Middle Ages there was no difference in footwear for the left or right foot.

The strict hierarchy of the feudal era helped one of the most unusual types of shoe to triumph, the pointed shoe, a shoe quite unsuited for walking about.



Famous footwear: used by, from left, Chancellor Kohl, ex Bonn President Carl Carstens and tennis star Steffi Graf. (Photo: dpa)

The regulations governing aristocrats' dress permitted a prince to have a shoe point 80 centimetres in length, but rich patricians had to be satisfied with a shoe point only 30 centimetres long.

Bavarian peasants, sentenced to hard socage, put their trust in the stout, practical clog which in 1525 became a symbol of the German Peasants' Confederation.

In the heyday of absolutism shoe design soared to unimaginable heights. In French court culture the heel came into vogue, for men as well. It had been invented much earlier by the military, however. In the 10th century Oriental bowmen wore riding-boots with heels so that they could shoot their arrows from their horses standing up in the stirrups.

When the French Revolution put an end to aristocratic fashions, the boot became the important article of footwear for up-and-coming members of the bourgeoisie.

But the real revolution in fashion came in the 20th century when the leg was revealed. Until then it had been modestly concealed as an erotic part of the body.

In our post-modern society anything is possible in fast-moving fashion. Fashion quickly latched on to marketing punks' boots and gymn shoes as articles of protest against the establishment.

The "gymn shoe generation" has its place in the history of the shoe. This generation is symbolically represented in the exhibition by the gym shoes worn by Joschka Fischer, a member of the Green Party, who wore them when he was sworn in as a minister in the Hesse state assembly, the Federal Republic's first Greens minister. Other prominent people have also lent their footwear for the exhibition. Tennis stars Boris Becker and Steffi Graf sent the tennis shoes they wore for their Wimbledon victories.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl is represented by a pair of well-worn, black hiking boots. The broad worn-out-shoes worn by the Clown Grock are also on display.

Hauenstein, which in the 1960s had more than 30 shoe factories employing 3,000, has amplified the exhibition considerably with many shoe-making machines from the past. The village now has only a few shoe factories employing a few hundreds. It is soon to become the location of the first shoe machine museum in the Federal Republic.

dpa

(Bremer Nachrichten, 8 July 1989)

Gormandizing at a fountain of chocolate

An exhibition on the history of chocolate has been put on in the Gürzenich Museum in Cologne for the 150th anniversary of the Stollwerck chocolate company.

The historic rooms of the building are permeated with the tempting aroma of chocolate, making the mouth water.

Children's dreams come true. There is a chocolate fountain where a continuous stream of chocolate from 16 jets pours into an enormous copper pan.

Visitors can pick up a waffle and help themselves, tasting the chocolate until they can eat no more.

This chocolate fountain is for many the high point of the exhibition.

Visitors to it are greeted with the words, "Long live chocolate and those who discovered it." The exhibition, covering 3,000 square metres, displays what at first was "currency" for South and Central American Indians and the Aztecs: cocoa beans.

Young cocoa plants are maturing in the exhibition in the shade of banana plants in botanical gardens, especially laid out for the show.

The harvested beans are ground by a grinding stone about 1000 years old, used by the Indians.

The beans are then taken to a miniature factory, where chocolates can be made. Hans Imhoff, chairman of the



Stollwerck supervisory board, said that a tour of this history of chocolate will "enchant, amuse and astonish" visitors.

Herr Imhoff says that he eats a bar of chocolate every day, and he is so fascinated by this "food of the gods" that he is looking for a plot of land in central Cologne where the exhibition can be housed permanently in a museum.

Chocolate had its influence on the times. The luxury of the 18th century is reflected in the valuable silver and porcelain chocolate pots and cups.

Taking "morning chocolate" with breakfast in bed was then a sign of an aristocratic life-style.

There are also curiosities in the exhibition such as the gramophone on which small chocolate records can be played.

Health fanatics will find an old advertising film clip from the 1950s amusing: it points out chocolate's high calory-content and nutritive value.

The visitor will also be amused by the chocolate and confectionery shop from Zwickau with its original stock from the end of the last century, or the opulent chocolate boxes dating from the 1950s.

Chocolate's future seems assured. Chocolate enthusiasts who lose their appetite for it during the hot weather have been promised relief.

Hans Imhoff has acquired a patent for making "summer" chocolate. This chocolate, especially made for summer weather, should be on the market within the next couple of years. Its special production process will make it less likely to melt in the heat.

However, it will taste no differently to traditional kinds of chocolate. Fingers sticky with chocolate will be a thing of the past.

Annette Wirth

(Die Welt, Bonn, 10 July 1989)

Adam and Eve at the push of a button

The poems are written in Chinese or Mongolian characters. Beside the artist's signature there is a stamp from the censorship authorities.

The water-coloured scenes are explicit representations of love and pleasure in every walk of life.

The well-preserved scroll picture from ancient China is worth DM50,000 to a collector. It fills a whole show-case in the Museum for Erotic Art, which has been opened in Munich.

Although the erotic has been part of the cultural history of peoples from every period, there are few collections open to the public of this genre of art.

There are, of course, the finds from Pompeii in the Archeological Museum in Naples, the drawings in Vienna's Albertina and the Indian objects in the Gold Museum in Lima.

Only San Francisco has the Erotic Art Museum open to the public, which includes contemporary exhibits.

Munich collector Manfred Schilling believes that he has filled a gap with the opening of his museum.

He was only ten when he helped his teacher at Neuberg an der Donau to set up a museum of local history. His grandfather was an art dealer; his great-grandfather a painter.

He explains why he has specialised in collecting erotica by saying, "Perhaps because I'm a bachelor."

While in Japan as a teacher at a commercial college he became interested in erotica. Some of the most beautiful items in his collection of 110 exhibits come from there.

There is, for example, a netsuke (a small carved ornament, used to fasten small objects to a sash), showing lovers in a pomegranate.

The Japanese pillow books, presented to a newly-weds on their wedding night, are also beautifully worked.

Herr Schilling complains that today erotic works of art are frowned upon in the Far East.

The love-life of the Buddha was once not taboo, but there are exhibits on this theme in the Munich museum.

The oldest piece in the Munich collection is a Bacchus goblet made in Germany about 1600, which shows an hermaphrodite.

There is an ivory chess set from France in which the smallest physical details are recognisable.

An English snuff-box is embellised with a brothel scene.

The ribald Viennese bronze from the end of the 19th century has been reproduced cheaply today by pressure-dye casting. The "Mönchskugel" (monk's ball) mocks the icons worn round the neck by priests.

Ornamental plates, match-boxes, belt buckles and boxes were all decorated with scenes from the erotic. Of course, there is kitsch in this concealed nook of art, where artists, now well-known, were once active.

Expensive Swiss watches were decorated in Budapest with couples who moved in an explicit manner as the seconds tick away.

The "cat-man", designed by Tiffany, is an Arab. When his cloak is opened, there is a young girl, arms round his neck.

Adam and Eve move towards each other at the press of a button, for the characters can be moved by a spring.

The Erotic Museum has a photographic department. At first "naked wild ones" were photographed. Then before the First World War pictures of housemaids were taken; then later plump girl-friends of the artist were posed in front of the cameras.

In the 1920s they were followed by imitations of sculptures from antiquity under the slogan "Living marble," frivolous and sterile (sometimes in leotards).

They were to have been models for artists but an enormous number of picture post-cards of these models were produced. There could never have been that many artists.

Karl Stankiewitz

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